Eros in Poetry and Prose: Book Twelve

Compiled and edited by

Patrick Bruskiewich

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Eros in Poetry and Prose

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Cover: Something Surreal … by Patrick

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For he is my Lord

And I am his Concubine.

… Naked I lay there

Aki Kurosawa

The Eros in Poetry and Prose Series

Eros in literature is one of the finest and most sublime way to share one's love.

The purpose of the ***Eros in Poetry and Prose*** Series is to share some of the most amorous and enticing pieces of poetry, prose and art to be found in the English Speaking World.

This is the Twelfth book in the series. Its release coincides with Valentine's Day 2026.

In this edition you will find original poems and pieces of prose, and art all meant to tickle your fancy ...

Enjoy!

Patrick Bruskiewich
Vancouver, BC, Canada

Eros in Poetry

Sonnet Actualities by e.e. cumings

i like my body when it is with your body by e.e. cummings

i like my body when it is with your
body. It is so quite new a thing.
Muscles better and nerves more.
i like your body, i like what it docs,
i like its hows, i like to feel the spine
of your body and its bones, and the trembling
-firm-smooth ness and which i will
again and again and again
kiss, i like kissing this and that of you,
i like, slowly stroking the, shocking fuzz
of your electric furr, and what-is-it-comes
over parting flesh .... And eyes big love-crumbs
and possibly i like the thrill
of under me you so quite new

I

When my love comes to see me
it’s just a little like music, a little more
like curving colour (say orange)
against silence, or darkness. ...
the coming of my love emits

a wonderful smell in my mind,
you should see when i turn to find
her how my least heart-beat becomes less.
And then all her beauty is a vise
whose stilling lips murder suddenly me,
but of my corpse the tool her smile makes something
suddenly luminous and precise
—and then we are I and She....
what is that the hurdy-gurdy's playing

II

it is funny, you will be dead some day.
By you the mouth hair eyes, and i mean
the unique and nervously obscene
need; it's funny. They will all be dead
knead of lustfulhunched deeplytoplay lips
and stare the gross fuzzy-*pash* *
—dead—and the dark gold delicately smash ...
grass, and the stars, of my shoulder in stead.
It is a funny thing. And you will be
and i and all the days and nights that matter
knocked by sun moon jabbed jerked with ecstasy
... tremble (not knowing how much better
than me will you like the rain's face and
the rich improbable hands of the Wind)

* (*pash* – a strong feeling of liking or loving someone or something, especially feelings that do not last very long)

IV

utterly and amusingly i am pash
possibly because
dusk and if it
perhaps dreamingly Is (not-
quite trees hugging with the rash,
coherent light
) only to trace with
stiffening slow shrill eyes beyond a fit-
and-cling of stuffs the alert willing myth
of body, which will make oddly to strut
my indolent priceless smile,
until
this very frail enormous star (do you see
it?) and this shall dance upon the nude
and final silence and shall the
(i do but touch you) timid lewd
moon plunge skilfully into the hill.

V

before the fragile gradual throne of night
slowly when several stars are

opening one beyond one immaculate curving
cool treasures of silence
(slenderly wholly
rising, herself uprearing wholly slowly,
lean in the hips and her sails filled with dream—
when on a green brief gesture of twilight
trembles the imagined galleon of Spring)
somewhere unspeaking sits my life; the grim
clenched mind of me somewhere begins again,
shares the year's perfect agony. Waiting
(always) upon a fragile instant when
herself me (slowly, wholly me) will press
in the young lips unearthly slenderness

VI

when i have thought of you somewhat too
much and am become perfectly and
simply Lustful ... sense a gradual stir
of beginning muscle, and what it will do to me
before shutting ... understand
i love you ... feel your suddenly body reach
for me with a speed of white speech
(the simple instant of perfect hunger
Yes)
how beautifully swims
the fooling world in my huge blood,

cracking brains A swiftlyenormous light
—and furiously puzzling through, prismatic, whims,
the chattering self perceives with hysterical fright
a comic tadpole wriggling in delicious mud

The Passionate Man is by Patrick Bruskiewich

The self passionate man is ...

for those
        objectively;
                from
the infinitesimal
        the striving
                can best us;

the bonds
        that free us

friend who utter
        Truth to us

a wrestle measured
that makes the greatest

that are and am

Pictorial: A Model Sitting for the First Time (circa 1905)

Naked I Lay There … by Aki Kurosawa

He had aged so much
in just a few years.
His hand was frail to my touch.
This brought me to tears.

He was now eighty years old.
To celebrate this we had all gathered.
When we were invited we were not told
how much he had changed, rather

That ‘his time was running out’
so we came expecting to see him
perhaps one last time, or
never again. His life had grown dim.

When his wife had taken ill
he watched the love of his life
crumble into nothing, will
he did try to keep her alive.

Then one day she was gone
forever, and he too started to crumble.
I knew him ten years ago,
when he taught *Haiku* at our school.

It was romantic, listening to him
recite the words of love as
if they were his own, as if
he were talking just to me.

I used to close my eyes imagining him
much younger, thinking we were all alone
just the two of us, under a tree
in spring time, his hand on my breast,

He knew what he was doing to us young women,
devoid of love and feeling very romantic.
You could hear
the beating of our hearts,
and smell our fragrance.

We were his flowers, our nectar flowed
as freely as his words. It was so romantic
listening to him, as he whispered in our ears
and into the echoing hollows of us.

I fell in love with him. We all did.
But every night he went home to his wife,
as we went to our empty beds, clutching our *Haiku*
close to our bare breasts, we his blossoming flowers.

We took to writing him *Haiku*

which he enjoyed to collect
all for himself. He told us this …
He would never let his wife see them.

When at his eightieth he saw me
his face flushed, and I knew why …
the Haiku I sent him would make
even a monk throw open his robe.

He asked that I sit next to him
which I did, although others wished
they had. He did not eat much that night,
but he did drink. He got a bit tipsy,

So one of us had to help him –
Home. I did not mind. It was not
far to his place. He did not have
to ask me. I could see that in his eyes.

His apartment was tiny, well ordered.
It had a woman's touch, amidst
the shelves and shelves and shelves of books …
He had spent a lifetime collecting *Haiku*.

His bedroom was small and his bathroom too.
I helped him with his clothes,
and washed his back. So as not to get my dress

wet I took it off … my bra and panties too.

He closed his eyes and started to sing
a song a little boy would sing when
his mother washed his back.
That said a lot about him I did not know.

Then I splashed him with water and
helped him into the bath. He kept
his eyes closed until he sat down,
and I sat down beside him and his bath.

I asked him why he kept his eyes closed.
He told me he wanted me to feel comfortable
here with him .., I said I did
and got into the bath with him.

He started to recite *Haiku*, but not
just any tome. He recited to me
my *Haiku* I had written him, word for word,
perfectly after the passage of many years.

I had written him as a Geisha would
write her Master. The he recited to me *Haiku*
he had written but never shared
with anyone before … not even his wife.

His words were so romantic that then
and there I decided I would stay the night …
but not share his bed. Just to keep
him company, until the crack of dawn.

Once he had been set to bed
I curled up on his couch, watching
the traffic lights play across the ceiling
while the noise serenaded me to sleep …

Just as I was about to fall asleep I
heard from his room, the crying of what
could come from a little boy scared to be alone.
I got up and looked in on him.

He was asleep, yet had tears in his eyes.
So I took pity on him and crawled under
the covers besides him. He did not move
so I lifted his arm to embrace me.

Then I guided his frail hand to between
my legs until his fingers found my special
place. The moment he touched me
he stopped crying. He was no longer alone

For he is my Lord
And I am his Concubine.

… Naked I lay there

Song of Solomon 4:12-15

Come with me from Lebanon, my bride.
Leave Lebanon behind, and come.
Leave your high mountain hideaway.
Abandon your wilderness seclusion,
Where you keep company with lions
and panthers guard your safety.
You've captured my heart, dear friend.
You looked at me, and I fell in love.
One look my way and I was hopelessly in love!
How beautiful your love, dear, dear friend—
far more pleasing than a fine, rare wine,
your fragrance more exotic than select spices.
The kisses of your lips are honey, my love,
every syllable you speak a delicacy to savor.
Your clothes smell like the wild outdoors,
the fresh scent of high mountains.
Dear lover and friend, you're a secret garden,
a private and pure fountain.
Body and soul, you are paradise,
a whole orchard of succulent fruits—
Ripe apricots and peaches,
Pomegranates, oranges and pears;

Nut trees and cinnamon,
and all scented woods;
Mint and lavender,
and all herbs aromatic;
A garden fountain, sparkling and splashing,
fed by spring waters from the Lebanon mountains.

Two Poems from Catullus

Sappho's Ode

Blest as th' immortal gods is he,
The youth, who fondly sits by thee,
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

'Twas that deprived my soul of rest,
And raised such tumults in my breast;
For while I gazed, in transport toss'd,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

My bosom glow'd; the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
On my dim eyes a darkness hung;
My ears with hollow murmurs rung:

With dewy damp my limbs were chill’d;
My blood with gentle horrors thrill’d;
My feeble pulse forgot to play;
I fainted, sank, and died away.

TRANSLATED BY AMBROSE PHILLIPS

To Lesbia. On Her Falsehood

To me alone, thou said’st, thy love was true,
And true, should be, though Jove himself might woo.
I loved thee, Lesbia, not as rakes may prize
The favourite wanton who has pleased their eyes;
Mine was a tender glow, a purer zeal;
’Twas all the parent for the child can feel.

Thy common falsehood now, thyself I know;
And though my frame with fiercer heat may glow,
Yet Lesbia’s vile and worthless in my sight,
Compared with Lesbia once my heart’s delight;
Nor wonder passion’s unrestrained excess
Makes me desire thee more, but love thee less.

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE LAMB

Pictorial: A Young Model and her Amphora (circa 1912)

Ahh what a gush! by Patrick Bruskiewich

There are some amorous poems
that ‘nere only be writ at night,
where bliss is where our heart do roam,
beneath the glow of soft moonlight.

It is when I remember her touch,
… the softness of her lovely thighs,
and the mystery of her, hid much
beneath pink silk … and fitful sighs.

How she did strip me bare
and grab hold of me … so tight,
then enjoyed me without a care,
for the entire of the night.

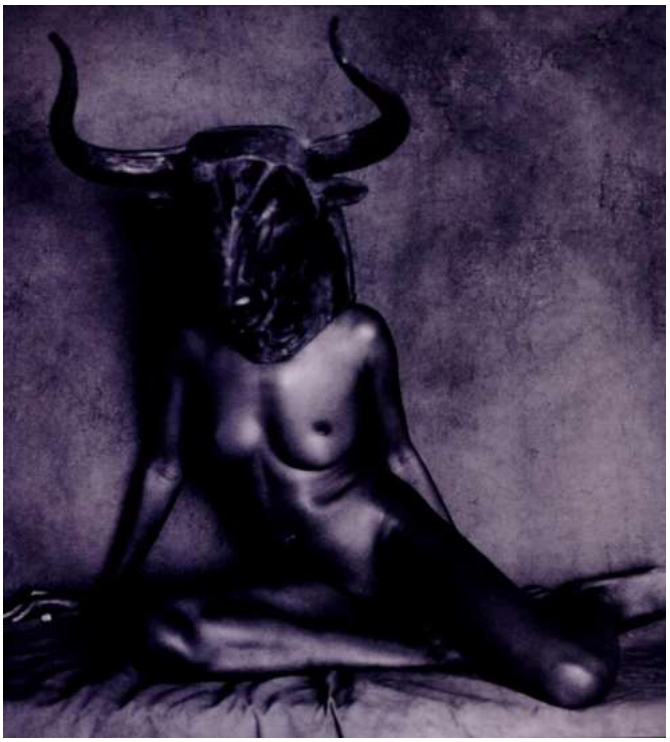
She roamed about my body, an explorer
wandering about her undiscovered country.
You would think … plain me … would bore her
but in me she found boundless bounty.

When morning came her panties
she still had on … in vestal bright
but with me she had her fancies
full … she had drained me of my might.

But the top of her was fully bare,
so I suckled at her modest breasts,
as if I were her hungry foal, and she my mare.
Then she wet herself … *ahh what a gush*!

She had to take her pink panties off,
It was then I buried her in kisses, where
her crested mound of Venus stood … aloft
delicately bidding me … without a care!
Now that she was completely bare ...

Pictorial: There's something is out of sorts here … don't you think?



Two Poems by William Shakespeare

How like a Winter Hath my Absence Been

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.
Sonnet 97

Blow Blow Thou Winter Wind

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man’s ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,

Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:

Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly...

Winter-Time by Robert Louis Stevenson

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit

To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap;
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding cake.

Spellbound by Emily Brontë

The night is darkening round me,
The wild winds coldly blow;
But a tyrant spell has bound me
And I cannot, cannot go.
The giant trees are bending
Their bare boughs weighed with snow.
And the storm is fast descending,
And yet I cannot go.
Clouds beyond clouds above me,
Wastes beyond wastes below;
But nothing drear can move me;

I will not, cannot go.

Four Poems by Robert Frost

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Desert Places

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast
In a field I looked into going past,
And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,
But a few weeds and stubble showing last.

The woods around it have it - it is theirs.
All animals are smothered in their lairs.
I am too absent-spirited to count;
The loneliness includes me unawares.

And lonely as it is, that loneliness
Will be more lonely ere it will be less –
A blanker whiteness of benighted snow
WIth no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
Between stars - on stars where no human race is.
I have it in me so much nearer home
To scare myself with my own desert places.

Dust of Snow

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow

From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

Stars

How countlessly they congregate
O'er our tumultuous snow,
Which flows in shapes as tall as trees
When wintry winds do blow!—

As if with keenness for our fate,
Our faltering few steps on
To white rest, and a place of rest
Invisible at dawn,--

And yet with neither love nor hate,
Those stars like some snow-white
Minerva's snow-white marble eyes
Without the gift of sight.

Pictorial: A Model and Her Wares (circa 1900)

The Bells by Edgar Allen Poe

Hear the sledges with the bells –
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells –
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

In the Bleak Midwinter by Christina Rossetti

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter

Long ago.
Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

Change Upon Change by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Five months ago the stream did flow,
The lilies bloomed within the sedge,
And we were lingering to and fro,
Where none will track thee in this snow,
Along the stream, beside the hedge.
Ah, Sweet, be free to love and go!
For if I do not hear thy foot,
The frozen river is as mute,
The flowers have dried down to the root:
And why, since these be changed since May,
Shouldst thou change less than they.

And slow, slow as the winter snow
The tears have drifted to mine eyes;
And my poor cheeks, five months ago

Set blushing at thy praises so,
Put paleness on for a disguise.
Ah, Sweet, be free to praise and go!
For if my face is turned too pale,
It was thine oath that first did fail, -
It was thy love proved false and frail, -
And why, since these be changed enow,
Should I change less than thou.

Pictorial: A Picturesque Desert Princess

Snow-Flakes by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Out of the bosom of the Air,
Out of the cloud-folds of her garments shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare,
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft, and slow
Descends the snow.

Even as our cloudy fancies take
Suddenly shape in some divine expression,
Even as the troubled heart doth make
In the white countenance confession,
The troubled sky reveals
The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,
Slowly in silent syllables recorded;
This is the secret of despair,
Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,
Now whispered and revealed
To wood and field.

Beauty by Charles Baudelaire

Conceive me as a dream of stone:
my breast, where mortals come to grief,
is made to prompt all poets' love,
mute and noble as matter itself.

With snow for flesh, with ice for heart,
I sit on high, an unguessed sphinx
begrudging acts that alter forms;
I never laugh, I never weep.

In studious awe the poets brood
before my monumental pose
aped from the proudest pedestal,
and to bind these docile lovers fast
I freeze the world in a perfect mirror:

The Naked and the Nude by Robert Graves

For me, the naked and the nude
(By lexicographers construed
As synonyms that should express
The same deficiency of dress
Or shelter) stand as wide apart
As love from lies, or truth from art.

Lovers without reproach will gaze
On bodies naked and ablaze;
The Hippocratic eye will see
In nakedness, anatomy;
And naked shines the Goddess when
She mounts her lion among men.

The nude are bold, the nude are sly
To hold each treasonable eye.
While draping by a showman's trick
Their dishabille in rhetoric,
They grin a mock-religious grin
Of scorn at those of naked skin.

The naked, therefore, who compete
Against the nude may know defeat;
Yet when they both together tread
The briary pastures of the dead,

By Gorgons with long whips pursued,

How naked go the sometimes nude!

Pictorial: A Woman and a Man In a State of Bliss

Eros in Prose

I Sat for David Hamilton by Victoria

[**London**] Only a handful of us have stepped forward to tell our stories of how we sat for David Hamilton in the 1970's and 1980's. At the time, most of us didn't mind the attention. We were young, beautiful and impressionable. And he was a famous photographer. If you were blond and had blue eyes he was interested in you.

I am a strawberry blond and have emerald green eyes. One afternoon in 1981 he nonetheless did take a figurative photograph of me. He asked politely. I let him …

Many years later one of his models claimed improprieties but this was never proven in court. In 2016 David took his own life soon after a book came out from one of his '*girls'* claiming he had done her wrong. A French actress wrote a book and also stated a whisper campaign seeking to destroy David's reputation. The book was published by a French publisher and French actress racked in notoriety and money … She did not name names, but the book appeared in the wake of the 2013 Graham Ovenden indecency case which played its way through the courts in London.

Under France's statute of limitations, charges must be brought within 20 years for rape and 10 years for sexual abuse. The suggested improprieties were said to have occurred nearly thirty years before, when she was thirteen, well outside the statute of limitations and therefore not subject to prosecution.

She knew that when she published her book. What made matters even worst is the French actress had posed nude for the French Magazine *Gala* and received money for doing this. She has also flaunted herself topless to the press at many venues in the Mediterranean. To David's other '*girls'* this all seemed suspect.

Making such claims, and then playing a coquette to make money off her notoriety, you must wonder if the French actress has a conscience. Her book and her insinuations resulted in David taking his own life. There are rumors that the French actress even tried to pat David down ... hoping to get hush money out of him, but we will never know for sure.

After David's suicide, Anja Schüte, gave her impressions of him in public statements. Anja had appeared in three of his films, unaccredited as a ballerina in *Laura*, then as a credited actress in both *Tender Cousins* and *Premiers Desires*. She remembered David as a gentle sensitive person who always treated her appropriately. She is quoted as saying,

> *"I knew him as a person who abhorred violence and was very refined ... He showed me the world, but never treated me inappropriately."*

David Hamilton and Anja Schüte, circa 1980

Schüte confirmed that her parents were always there when she traveled with or worked with David. Anja never "*heard of him molesting a girl*". She launched her professional acting career in Hamilton's 1980 film *Tender Cousins*.

"He discovered me. I made three films with him. More than any other girl."

I happened to know a few of his 'girls' well enough to ask around in 2016 about their time with David and they all said the same thing … he was an artist and was only interested in his art. He was kind to them and a gentleman with them. Their parents were always nearby when he photographed them, and had consented.

Like the man, David's films were also kind and gentle in their nature, as in *Tender Cousins*. Here is a picture of Anja about to take her bath.

I cannot remember if this was this film that was made in David's 800 year old house at Cape D'Agde or whether it was *Premier Desires* that was. I twice visited David in his old house, once unannounced and the second time preplanned (I had written him a letter to say I was coming).

I met David for the first time one summer at Cape D'Agde in the early 1980's. I was a teenager on holidays at Cape D'Agde with my mother and step brother. My step father was back in London working that summer. We were staying at the *Marseillan plage* for a week. After a few days I had seen everything I wanted to see at the Marseillan plage. I had heard there was a naturalist beach (*plage naturalist*), just a short walk south. Being curious and adventurous, one morning I set out to find it.

After a half hour walk I found myself at a sparsely habited beach with few people about. But they definitely were not wearing any bathing suits. The beach was surrounded by a wooden stick fence and you had to walk down a wooden walk way to get to the beach front.

I was just going to stand for a few minutes at the entrance to the beach when a girl saw me and rushed up from the water to say hello. She was French, about my age. She was completely naked. I could speak a little French. She introduced herself as Sophia and I said I was Victoria. She took my hand and invited me to come down to join her. I followed her down to the water front. She said I should take off my *'silly bathing suit,'* which I did. We sat under an umbrella for a while and chatted as best as we could because her English was about as bad as my French.

It was awkward not because I was now naked but because I had terrible tan lines and was white where ever my bathing suit had hidden me away. I looked almost comical. She, on the other hand, had no tan lines. Sophia saw I was getting self-conscious and so she suddenly took my hand and walked me down into the surf. The moment the water touched my sensitive parts I felt different. Perhaps it was the sensation that I was naked for everyone to see. It was a thrilling sensation. But as I looked around only Sophia was noticing me.

We played in the surf for perhaps ten minutes when we heard her name being called. It was lunch time and so she invited me to join her and her two friends. The three of them were off to have lunch with their friend 'David.'

Sophia would not take no as an answer from me. She insisted that I should come too. I expected them to put on some clothes or at least a bathing suit. But to my surprise they just marched up to his house *au natural*. I put back on my bathing suit.

He was waiting for them with a large table covered with sandwiches and pastries. He served lemonade and proper English tea to his guests. There were a half dozen women of all ages, perhaps me being the youngest, who just lounged around him

totally naked as if they did this every day of the week (which I think they did) while I sat there quietly self-conscious that I was in my bathing suit and was an interloper.

I was introduced to him by Sophia and we struck up a conversation. To begin with he said I could come and visit him any time I wanted to. While he spoke, David was quiet and calm and everyone listened. It was a very pleasant lunch were it not for the fact only David and I wore clothing. The rest of the women were unabashed.

He wore a pink silk shirt and well pressed Egyptian white cotton shorts as well as white socks and sandals. He also wore a gold chain around his neck which was the fashion at the time, and an expensive watch. His hair was frisson-curly like in his picture with Anja.

It was David who explained to me that he was an artist, filmmaker and photographer and he had '*worked with*' each of his '*girls*.' After I had enjoyed a sandwich and pastry, David invited me into his study next door to the patio where we lunched and showed me some of his photographs as well as several of the books he had already published. I recognized some of his lunch time friends in the figurative photographs he showed me and in several of his recent books.

It was then and there that I realized they were all blonde and blue eyed. I was the odd duckling out, clothed, with tan lines, strawberry blonde with green eyes.

He then politely turned to me and asked if he could take my photograph. I said sure. Then there was an awkward silence as I realized he wanted me to take off my bathing suit.

With the other women close by I felt safe and so I did take off my bathing suit and let him take only one photograph of me standing, up against the wall. As I took my bathing suit off he turned his back to me, which I thought was unnecessary but thoughtful nonetheless. Then he turned around and looked up at me. His eyes studied me carefully. I could tell my tan lines disappointed him. They were seen by him as blemishes on my figure. I looked down and suddenly felt embarrassed with myself. Compared to the others I was just a small girl starting out in their world.

As I stood there naked before him the same sensation passed over me that I had when *j'etait nu au plage*. I subconsciously stepped back until I was up against the wall and could feel the coolness and roughness of the wall against my bare backside.

David took his time setting up his camera on its tripod. He did not seem to be in as big of a hurry as I was to take the photograph. He measured the distance to me with a measuring tape and then measured the light intensity against the wall and then against my skin.

I could feel his warmth as he held the light meter close to my breasts. I leaned forward to touch his hand with my breast. As I did this he looked up at me. As I looked into his eyes I could sense he was as nervous as I was.

Slowly he walked back to his camera, looked through the view finder, said 'stand still,' then took a single picture. He then turned around so I could put my bathing suit back on.

When we returned to join the others Sophia instinctively knew what had transpired between David and I. She gave me a hug. There was an understanding that I was now one of them.

From that point on in our luncheon I was happy David all but ignored me. He had gotten what he wanted from me, a figurative pictorial. Perhaps I no longer intrigued him as much as did when I had first arrived?

After that afternoon I did not go back to the *plage naturalist* for the rest of our visit to Cape D'Agde. I guess I had second thoughts about what I had done. I did not tell my mother or anyone that I had met David and let him take my photograph until I heard that he had committed suicide. But a few summers later we were back at Cape D'Agde andI felt an inner urge to visit him a second time.

That summer I visited David a second time writing him I was coming and asking him to take another picture of me. That summer I did away with the tan lines, but I was not fully prepared to do away with my bathing suit bottom: I had darkened my strawberry blonde hair and had filled out a bit. My freckles had faded as well. I also felt much more self-confident with myself.

Honestly, I wanted David to see how much I had changed since we first met me. I also wanted to see whether that wonderful sensation would return. It did.

He was kind and gentle with us. I can understand the beauty he saw in us 'girls.' Today this beauty is both timeless and admired by millions. I, for one, have no regrets sitting for him.

I cried when he died. We had lost our artist friend …

Pictorial: The Delta of Venus …

Prostitution in the Ancient World by Leo Markun

Of all the gods of antiquity, very few were ascetic. Many religious holidays were celebrated with sexual orgies. Dionysus and his Roman counterpart, Bacchus, may be named as gods especially favorable to libidinous lust. They were primarily the gods of wine; but Priapus, whom Dinoysus begot on Aphrodite, goddess of love, was the Greek phallic god, the deity of fruitfulness and the generative power.

Because the phenomena of sex appear shameful or even sinful to us, we find it hard to appreciate how the ancients felt about these things. Why does not sex appear to us as natural and as open a thing as eating and drinking? The social psychologists are not unanimous in their answers to this question. Probably it is because primitive man, being constantly exposed to attacks from wild beasts and from his fellow-men, found it best to withdraw during the act of coition into a secluded place. Then the very fact that the sexual act was performed privately came to identify it with shameful things. The ascetic teachings of Christianity, themselves largely arising from the primitive sense of modesty and shame, have also contributed to our conception of sex as a dirty and sinful thing.

It is very difficult for us to understand the point of view of the tribes among which promiscuity is prescribed as a religious duty. We have our own peculiar superstitions, but we do not agree with the inhabitants of Java and New Guinea who hold that performing the sexual act in a field is absolutely necessary if the soil is to be fertile during the following year. We do not assign the first night of a woman's married life to a priest or a king, or yet to a stone or metal phallus, but we do make her defloration by her husband almost a religious rite.

The non-Hebraic races of Palestine were addicted to sexual orgies in the name of religion, as many passages in the Bible make clear. At times numbers of Jewish maidens went over to the worship of the nature divinities. Many of the outbursts of Jeremiah and the other prophets were directed against this practice.

Although Herodotus felt that sexual relations were unclean, yet in many parts of Greece there were organizations of holy prostitutes. Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers and spring, was according to legend originally a prostitute. Her annual festival, the *Floralia*, which was celebrated for a week at the end of April and the beginning of May, a time of great merriment and voluptuousness. We are told that during this holiday the Roman prostitutes used to publicly remove their clothing and to execute lively and lascivious dances.

There have been various theories as to how religious prostitution arose. Perhaps it was in some way a substitution for a state of unbridled sexual freedom. However, the fact that generation and birth are the great mysteries of life is no doubt sufficient explanation.

Prostitution Among the Greek

We may date the beginning of organized prostitution in Europe, religious prostitution aside, in the time of the great Athenian legislator Solon. He was a great reformer, and his object in establishing brothels was to reduce promiscuity, not to increase it.

A bust of Solon

The laws of Solon permitted a man to kill anybody he found cohabiting with his wife. The rape of an unmarried woman, however, was punished by a fine, and the seduction of any unmarried woman except a harlot, by a lesser fine. The fine for a rape amounted to about the value of a hundred sheep, and for that of a seduction, to about the value of twenty sheep. Solon forbade men to sell their sisters and daughters except in cases of unchastity.

His laws regulated many rather intimate matters. One of them provided that an heiress whose husband proved impotent might choose one of his relatives to provide her with an heir to her estate. The husband of an heiress had to cohabit with her at least three times a month.

Some of Solon's other laws might be more acceptable to husbands of today. A woman was not allowed to travel with more than three dresses, for instance. She was not to travel at night except in a wagon with a light carried before it. When a man

put certain provisions into his will because of his wife's solicitations, these were held invalid.

Dr. Iwan Bloch, whose large work on prostitution has for its object the demonstration that it is an unnecessary evil, calls Solon the first fallacious defender of governmental regulation. His fallacy, according to the views of men who favor the abolition of the brothel, consists in his opinion that legalized prostitution preserves the sanctity of the home and preserves the chastity of citizens' wives and daughters. This is of course the idea which lies behind every defense of the "red light district" by respectable and law-abiding men and women.

The paternalism of the state was carried much further by the ancient Greeks than it is with us. That is perfectly clear to any careful reader of Plato's "Republic" or of Aristotle's ethical and political works. There was nothing radically new about Solon's prescriptions of how certain matters within the family should be carried out.

Solon was by no means a feminist. He accepted without question the double standard of sexual morality. His whole system bound the wife to her husband, but permitted him full freedom of intercourse so long as he interfered with no other citizen's wife or daughter.

The prostitute class under Solon's system was not recruited from volunteers. It was made up of slaves, most of whom were foreigners. The prostitutes were maintained in brothels by the state. According to Nlkander, Solon gave the profits derived from the brothels to the priests of the temple of Aphrodite Pandemus. Probably he felt that prostitution was in some way still a religious matter.

However, he did not feel that this religion made the harlots themselves sacred. They were miserable prisoners of war who stood naked before the brothels to entice the passers- by. They were not permitted to choose, but had to find acceptable any male who presented the extremely low fee set by law.

Probably all women were held in little esteem at this time. Wives had one duty to perform, the bearing of legitimate children and heirs. Yet, as we have seen, Solon safeguarded the rights of such married women as had property of their own. Plutarch, however, when he came to report these provisions of Solon's laws, found them very strange. In general, the married woman was expected to remain at home and take care of the household and her children. She married early and she was seldom educated even in the arts necessary to a good housewife. She never dreamed of discussing literature or philosophy or politics with her husband.

The respectable wife of classical Greek times had probably less education than that of the average dweller in a Turkish seraglio. She was aloof from the world, too. She had not seen much of her husband before marriage. Love was not considered necessary between the bride and the groom.

Women were not admitted to the theatre, to the Olympic Games, or to other public and semi-public gatherings. This prohibition was customarily removed only in the case of prostitutes. The female sex was considered decidedly inferior to the male. In Homeric times women had been comparatively well off, although they were subject to violent abduction, marriage or concubinage by capture, and to all the vicissitudes which befall the female sex in unsettled periods. The beauty of a Helen might launch a thousand ships, and her lesser and perhaps luckier sisters were their husbands' advisers and honored comforters.

Neither in pre-classical or heroic Greece nor in classical times was it considered a light matter to have sexual intercourse with the wife or the unmarried female relative of another. The aggrieved person was usually permitted to take any revenge he could, not excluding death. The state, too, often set up various penalties designed to check adultery and fornication with women of the free class.

These dishonorable penalties turned men away from the chaste women and sent them to the slaves in the public brothels. There was no feeling of shame about relations with the public women. They were provided by the civic zeal of great statesmen. Furthermore, there was less to fear in visiting a prostitute than there is to-day. So long as the harlots were all slaves maintained by the state, there was little danger that they might be in league with thieves for the despoilment of their patrons. Of especial importance is the fact that there existed practically no fear of the venereal diseases.

Syphilis does not seem to have occurred in Europe until after Columbus discovered America. It was pretty surely brought to Spain from Haiti at that time.

Gonorrhea and chancroids appear to have existed in classical Europe, but yet the nature of the diseases, and especially the manner of their transmission, appear hardly to have been understood. It happens that gonorrhea is in some ways a more dangerous disease than even syphilis; but ignorance was bliss, and the fear of infection was something that ordinarily did not occur.

Prostitution was a means by which the despised slave class served to protect the chastity of free men's wives. Slavery was a very important factor in the social and

economic life of antiquity. An Athenian census of the Fourth Century before Christ gave the following figures for the population of the city: free citizens, 21,000; resident foreigners, 10,000; slaves, 400,000. Under such conditions there was naturally a tremendous social gulf between the slaves and their masters. Later, in Rome, emancipation became common, but in Greece the freeing of slaves was quite rare.

We can understand, then, that few free women entered the ranks of the prostitutes. It was possible, however, for a citizen's daughter to be captured by pirates or taken prisoner in a war. She might even be sold into slavery by her father. In this way and from the children of slaves the brothels were filled.

It was considered a sign of weakness among the old Greeks to fall in love with any woman. The prostitute existed for man's pleasure, the concubine to take care of his needs and his home, the wife to bear him legitimate children. The elder Cato called the wife a necessary evil, and this was also the Greek view.

Love was a disease, a mild form of madness. "Not in Homer nor in Hesiod nor in Aeschylus is there a love scene," says Dr. Bloch. Yet, when in the sixth book of the "Iliad, " Hector bids farewell to his wife Andromache, surely genuine love is shown on both sides. In general, the position of woman in Homeric times was higher than it afterwards became. Romantic love had existed in early Greece. We have but to name Sappho to make that plain. When we name her, though, in this connection, we are immediately reminded that this love might be homosexual. Of that anon.

In the "Antigone" of Sophocles, Creon calls his son Haemon "foul spotted heart—a woman's follower" when the young man pleads for the life of his beloved. Haemon,

however, perhaps having a touch of madness in him, slays himself at Antigone's side.

If we wish to understand why romantic love in general was of little importance to the Greeks, we must first of all remember that sex was open, unconcealed, unashamed. We are so very far from their point of view that even a novelist who talks much about the importance of phallic worship (Mr. D. H. Lawrence) becomes indignant about having to remove his clothing for a physician's examination. To the Greeks nakedness was no sin. The athletes at the Olympic Games did not wear shirts and drawers. Statues and paintings in the nude stood everywhere, and no one smirked at the sight. This very openness no doubt hindered the spiritualization of love. Love was a religious thing, but so were eating and drinking. They still are, in the Holy Communion—and many Christians still consider marriage a sacrament.

To individualize love was against the whole philosophical trend of classical Greece. The tendency was to look toward the perfection of the state, without regard to the improvement of any unit except as it contributed to the development of the whole. Any reader of the "Republic" should immediately perceive this fact. Plato's ideal state, in which perfect justice was to prevail, was to be ruled by the philosophers without regard to their own happiness. They would at once abolish the family and establish the community of wives and children.

"Our object in the construction of our state," according to Plato's Socrates, "is not to make any one class pre-eminently happy, but to make the whole state as happy as it can be." All that matters, according to this view, is divine symmetry. It is not utilitarianism (which, seeks the greatest good of the greatest number) any more than it is individualism.

According to most Greek thinkers, organized prostitution performed a service for the state. It was not an instrument of licentiousness, but a means of satisfying the natural wants of men.

"In the temperate man," says Aristotle, "the concupiscent element ought to live in harmony with reason, since nobleness is the object of them both, and the temperate man desires what is right, and desires it in the right way and at the right time, that is, according to the law of reason."

The idea that life should be a glorious orgy was accepted neither by the Greek philosophers nor the Greek populace. Aristotle's Golden Middle was the expression of a common ideal. Excess (or *hybris*) was the one great sin in the old Hellenic world. It was supposed to tempt the gods to send sorrow to the offending individual.

However, the Greek conception of moderation as applied to sexual matters was very far from Christian asceticism. There was no feeling, in antique and heathen times, that flesh was inherently sinful. Among some of the barbarian neighbors of the Greeks, this idea was evidently coming in. The Lydians, for instance, thought it shameful to strip off their clothing in order to participate in athletic games.

As we know, the Greeks erected statues in honor of their beautiful men and women. We are rather contemptuous of male beauty today. If we wish to be polite, we say "handsome," not "beautiful," of a man. Perhaps this is partly due to our different way of looking at homosexuality.

If we must worship something, it might as well be Beauty as any other idol we can set up. Certainly beauty is not an attribute of the female alone. Schopenhauer, in a well-known passage, argues that the female form is less comely than that of the male.

We moderns are obsessed, more or less consciously, by the idea that the object of the sexual act is the reproduction of the race. This idea, taught by some religions, has taken a firm hold on the unconscious mind of almost all of us. Even though we generally practice birth control, we have a violent prejudice against such forms of sexual intercourse as can not lead to generation.

Our most enlightened men tend to regard the practice of these as symptoms of mental illness or moral decay. The Greeks, however, regarded all forms of sexual enjoyment, even those which appear to us corrupt and perverse, as perfectly natural.

Dr. Bloch points out that satyriasis and nymphomania, that is to say, supernormal sexual feeling and desire in the male and the female, are represented in the Greek medical books as common diseases. This he attributes, at least in part, to the warm climate of the Hellenic peninsula. However, I think that sexual hyperesthesia was little if at all commoner among the Greeks than it is with us. The absence of prudery made people discuss the thing more freely, that is all. Our very physicians are ready to join in the work of draping statues with skirts and trousers. A woman Doctor of Medicine recently wrote to the editor of one of our staidest and most solid old monthlies, complaining that the fiction dealt with sexual problems which she found sufficiently discussed in her medical journals. What the Greek physicians called by their proper names, our own doctors label "*hysteria*" or "*neurasthenia*."

In antique times, prostitution was not con fined to the large cities. Brothels were to be found in little villages. The inhabitant of a small town did not find it necessary to employ the fiction of a business trip in order that he might lose his identity among the unknown crowds of Athens or Corinth. If he wished to enter the local brothel, he would not lose his reputation as an honorable citizen because he fulfilled his natural desires.

Nevertheless prostitutes were especially active among foreigners and other strangers, in the sea-ports, centers of trade, and religious centers. They followed the armies on their expeditions. They flocked to the universities. They were numerous at religious festivals, at pilgrimages, at fairs, at all places where men gathered in great numbers.

Some of the religious celebrations were especially dedicated to the prostitutes, as we have seen in the case of the *Floralia* at Rome. There were many such holidays in Greece as well, among which perhaps the most famous was the celebration of the harlots at Corinth in honor of laughter-loving Aphrodite.

Although most of the Greek courtesans were slaves, yet there were gradations among them. From the *hetaerse*, many of whom were really concubines living for a period with one man, and therefore really not prostitutes at all, down to the lowest wenches, there were all sorts of subdivisions.

Many of the slaves had been maidens or young wives of a good family, and had suddenly found themselves prostitutes after a pirate's surprise attack or the defeat of their city or tribe in war. Perhaps they had already been trained in music and the

dance. Else, if they were attractive and apparently capable of being taught, they might have lessons in the brothel.

A woman who could dance and sing or play a musical instrument was worth much more in the slave market than one who was merely a female animal of the human species. Although most of the Greeks didn't want their wives to be educated, they attached a special value to courtesans who could talk of learned things.

The prostitutes who stood at the entrance to the brothels were of the lowest and least valuable class. In a time when the sense of modesty was quite different from ours, it was possible for the prostitutes not only to entice men on the streets and in other public places, but also to go through the sexual acts in the more secluded streets and corners.

Among the higher types of the courtesan, we may name those capable of playing skilfully upon the various musical instruments then in use. These, together with singers, dancers, reciters, and readers, were much in demand at banquets. The formal feast among the Greeks was always a "stag party." Such women as were there came to entertain and amuse and give pleasure. Wives were invariably left at home.

The dances of the slave-women were chiefly of an openly erotic nature. Almost all dancing, ancient or modern, is more or less indicative or symbolical of the act of coition. In times when nakedness was no sin, this was plain enough. Today the dance hall is still often a brothel, or the recruiting-ground for the brothel.

With the dance was associated then, as now, certain forms of theatrical representations. Vestiges still remain of the belief that the theatre is no place for an

honorable woman. Among the Greeks, a woman who appeared on the stage was thereby clearly identified as a harlot.

In the regular comedy and tragedy of classical times, as in the early English theatre, men took all parts, representing alike male and female. There was no attempt at realism. The Attic theatre was romantic, idealized. The actors wore masks to make themselves appear divine or heroic, and they wore shoes that were designed to add to their apparent height.

The one form of the drama in which women took part was the mime, a sort of realistic burlesque or travesty. Imagine the burlesque show of today (or its aristocratic sister, the revue) removed from all fear of police interference and from all need to cater to the "high class family trade," and you have a fairly accurate conception of what the ancient Greek mimes were like. Openly lascivious dances were the rule. Of course the women who, naked or dressed in the half-concealment that is still more provocative, went through these symbolical gyrations, were ready to cap the climax after the performance.

The mime and the ancient equivalent of our cabaret merged into each other. The music and the dances of the mime tended to be more important than the words. This although some talented poets were among the writers of the mimes. In Byzantine days, the theatre which presented mimes came to be identified even in name with the brothel.

Perhaps this identification of the ancient burlesque theatre with sexual things is part of the reason why Puritans tend to frown altogether upon the theatre. The tradition

lingers, and even now the Methodist Church is gradually being won over to the view that the theatre is not necessarily and inherently vicious.

All forms of pleasure tend to be thought of and engaged in together. Although an excess of alcohol makes impotent, a moderate quantity, especially when taken with a generous meal, stimulates sexual desire. With the subtler sides of sex, flowers and delicate shades of perfume are associated. The serving-women and the young women who sold fruits and flowers in the market-places of old Greece were mostly courtesans.

Our word bagnio, which etymologically signifies a bath, means nothing more to us now than a brothel. The connection between public bathing and prostitution thus indicated has especially been developed in the Orient. However, we find traces of it in European antiquity, although it became much more significant in Europe in the later Middle Ages and in the Renaissance. The massagist or other bath attendant was often expected to perform sexual acts. The public baths were especially important for homosexual prostitution.

The brothels of Athens and other Greek cities tended to be grouped around the baths. They were also located in the neighborhood of the other places of amusement and recreation. "Other places," I say, because the bath was considered much more than merely a place to remove dirt from one's body. It ranked with the theatres, the circus, and other resorts which supplied entertainment. Around these and around the temples were established the principal houses of prostitution. The cheaper brothels were often located in the outskirts and suburbs of large cities.

In Shakespeare's day, somewhat similarly, the theatres, the bear-baiting pits, and the brothels formed a group on the Bankside, near Southwark, outside the limits of London.

The brothel in Greece was not only open and unashamed. It was in the nature of a public building and usually, during the classical period, was owned and operated by the state. In any case, it was strictly regulated by public officials.

Some of the brothels served also as hotels, and in most of them food and drink were offered for sale. Outside these brothels, many of the prostitutes of a higher type occupied small apartments or furnished rooms of their own.

The better-class courtesans were called *hetaerse*. The chief characteristic of this class was that the members became remarkably individualized. A *hetaerae* might become famous in the whole antique world, not only for beauty, but also for wit and culture.

Herodotus tells how *Rhodopis,* a famous courtesan, was redeemed from slavery by *Charaxus,* the brother of the poetess *Sappho,* but continued to pursue her trade in Egypt. It was said that she became immensely wealthy, and rumor had it that one of the pyramids was built at her expense.

Plutarch, in his life of Pericles, relates the common report that he plunged Athens into war with the Samians in order to please the heteara *Aspasia*. "She is said to have reserved her favors for the most powerful personages of Greece, in imitation of Thargelia, an Ionian lady of ancient times, of great beauty, ability, and attractions, who had many lovers among the Greeks, and brought them all over to the Persian

interest, by which means the seeds of the Persian faction were sown in many cities of Greece, as they were all men of great influence and position.

"Now, some writers say that Pericles valued *Aspasia* only for her wisdom and political ability. Indeed Socrates and his friends used to frequent her society; and those who listened to her discourse used to bring their wives with them, that they too might profit by it, although her profession was far from being honorable or decent, for she kept courtesans in her house. But Pericles seems to have been enamored more of Aspasia's person than of her intellect." Plutarch goes on to tell how Pericles sent his wife away and lived with Aspasia, "of whom he was passionately fond. He is said never to have gone in or out of the house during the day without kissing her."

Plutarch lived five centuries later than *Aspasia*, and he reports hearsay and legend. We can be pretty sure that no wives were brought to *Aspasia* to learn wisdom from her.

In the first volume of his work on prostitution, Iwan Bloch devotes a number of pages to a list of the famous courtesans and concubines of antiquity. There is Archippe, to whom the dramatist Sophocles left his fortune. There are the two famous courtesans named Lais. There is Leontion, beloved of Epicurus and his disciples, herself a writer and philosopher. There is Phryne, well known through all Greece for her beauty, whose golden statue stood in Delphi. There is Thais of Athens, who became the mistress of Alexander the Great and then sat on the throne with Ptolemaeus I of Egypt. The mother of this first Ptolemy, incidentally, had been the mistress of Alexander's father, Philip of Macedon.

Apelles, the most celebrated of Greek painters (contemporary with Alexander the Great, that is, of the Fourth Century before the Christian era) did not disdain to paint courtesans. For his most admired picture, "Venus Rising Out of the Sea", Phryne served as model, plunging naked into the sea on the occasion of a feast to the sea-god Poseidon. She is also said to have served as model to Praxiteles for the famous Cnidian Aphrodite.

The sense of shame developed rather late in Greece. The Greek vases of the Fifth Century before Christ, many of which portray brothel scenes, were considered respectable enough to be placed in an honorable citizen's home.

However, we find Aristotle in his "Politics" seeking the prohibition of the display of lascivious pictures. These were to be found not only in brothels but also in the private houses of the wealthy. No doubt Aristotle felt that these pictures would encourage sexual excess, drawing men away from the Golden Middle.

The opinion was advanced, even among the Greeks, that to refrain from sexual intercourse was pleasing to the gods and philosophically desirable. The physicians argued about the value of coition to the men and women who participated in it. There were some who felt that it was more healthful for the individual to refrain from it. Thus, although the ancient world generally left the sexual life free and untrammeled, there were all sorts of tendencies in the opposite direction.

The Greeks were a temperate people. They mixed their wine with water and ate sparingly of simple foods. There were, however, gluttonous individuals and topers; and there were times and places where rich voluptuousness prevailed.

Were the prostitutes of ancient Hellas like their modern successors, so far as personal characteristics are concerned? Dr. Bloch believes that the old Greek and Roman courtesans were like the typical modern prostitute, as Lombroso has described her. Among the attribute of the courtesans of all times and places are said to be piety, superstition, deceitfulness, jealousy, and shamelessness. Except perhaps for the last, a cynical philosopher might suggest that these traits apply to all women.

What Bloch has forgotten, I think, in applying these universal attributes of the prostitute to the harlots of antiquity, is the fact that most of the women went into the brothels absolutely against their own will. Once in the brothel, they learned the tricks of the profession and conformed somewhat to the prostitute type. However, under other circumstances they might have lived happily in monogamous marriage.

Lombroso's theory, which Bloch, to be sure, does not fully accept, is that the modern prostitute is such because of her inborn nature rather than because of the circumstances to which she is exposed.

Many of the minor details descriptive of the Greek courtesan apply also to the harlot of present-day Europe and America. The prostitutes of Greece and Rome put rouge upon their faces, and occasionally the respectable women followed them in this practice. Courtesans walked then as they walk now, with a lascivious twisting of the hips. Clothing was simpler among the Greeks than it is with us. Yet the hetaera found occasion to introduce new fashions.

The cosmetic art was evidently developed to quite as great a degree as it is with us. The art of making old or ugly prostitutes look like their more fortunate sisters was very closely studied. Our surgeons, to be sure, in taking up methods of

beautification, are likely to leave methods far behind. The old Hellenes could build up a nose or a chin out of clay, but not out of flesh and blood.

False teeth were known to the courtesans of ancient times, although they were of a primitive sort. Very likely these were constructed of wax or some similar substance, and were intended for ornament, not for use. Various sorts of dentifrices were known to antiquity, chiefly being used to beautify the teeth of prostitutes.

Dyeing the hair, supplying false hair, removing hair from the body, all these were practiced by the old Greek courtesans. The cosmetics of the ancient world, so far as we can now tell, were in no way inferior to those of today. Then, as now, red and white were to be had for the purchasing.

The prostitutes and those who profited by their earnings learned early in antiquity what every modern woman knows, the seductive power of the *decollete* and of half-concealment in general. The human imagination is powerful; that is why the nude is infinitely less "dangerous" than the partly draped. That is also the reason, by the way, why professional searchers for vice become angriest about works of art which they do not understand.

In general, then, the prostitute of ancient Greece was a great deal like her successors in Europe and America. Whatever differences are to be found are to be explained in terms of economic and possibly of philosophical changes. There is no need to enter here into the question of just how far philosophy depends on economic life. In any case, modern men do not look at the universe in exactly the same way as the ancients did.

We have no reason to believe that human nature or, to be specific, the sexual impulse, has in any way changed in the last five thousand years or so. This in spite of the numerous revival meetings, revelations, prophecies, and judicial executions of this period. More than that, the machinery and appointments of the brothel remain pretty much the same. The courtesan of today smokes a good many cigarettes and drinks as much whiskey as she can conveniently get. The prostitute of ancient Greece was also a drinker of alcoholic beverages. She had no tobacco, but she was addicted to various other drugs. The courtesan of India chews betel nuts and offers a supply to all callers.

Anatole France, in his novel "Thais", describes delightfully and with acute insight the life of a beautiful and very popular hetaera. His heroine lives not in classical Greece but in Egypt, when the great cities of that land are under a Hellenic civilization. There is a story here, a powerful story of how a certain devout monk exerts a remarkable influence over a courtesan and is himself influenced by her. The modern popularization of this theme is to be found in the drama "Rain", adapted from Maugham's "Miss Sadie Thompson."

I refer here to Anatole France's novel for the stylistic beauty which it undoubtedly possesses, or even for its psychological profundity, but for the vivid picture it presents of the aristocratic prostitute of antiquity. The hetaera lives for us again in her splendid house surrounded by rich furniture and draperies, waited on by many slaves, dining in magnificent luxury, looking calmly down upon the world of fashionable and brilliant young men at her feet.

We see also the prostitute swayed by the superstitions of her time, converted to Christianity, at last acclaimed as a saint. There is no exaggeration in Anatole France's account. Such things as he describes did actually occur.

It is said—and of course there is a good deal of truth in this saying—that in our own days harlots have swayed kingdoms, caused the downfall of monarchies, occasioned and decided problems of state. Always blue blood has voluntarily turned red in response to the red blood of beauty. To be sure, it is nearly impossible coldly to analyze the sexual problems of today. At every instant we are treading on somebody's toes, offending against one propriety or another, violating some taboo. Especially in America, where prostitution, although common enough, is generally illicit, it is difficult for the scientific investigator to assemble and publish his data.

In classical days, a man might go out and boldly purchase a season-ticket to the brothel. Perhaps he did not assume the self-righteous air of a man who has just subscribed for a box at the opera. As I have already mentioned, there were sexual reformers among the Greeks and Romans. At all times the brothel had its vigorous opponents.

In actual practice, though, almost the whole nubile male population patronized the harlot's house. It was easily accessible, the fees were cheap, and attendance, according to the consensus of opinion, was not shameful. Compared with the situation in classical times, attendance at the modern houses of prostitution in London or Paris or Amsterdam is quite light. There are a number of reasons why this is so. First, the cost has gone up to a considerable extent. There is also a new sense of shame or sexual modesty (prudery, in its extreme manifestations) which has to

some extent curbed natural instincts. Most important of all, no doubt, is the fear of syphilis which has spread since Columbus discovered the Americas.

In Solon's time the equivalent of a few cents purchased the services of an ordinary prostitute. The courtesans who were much sought after set a high price on themselves. Occasionally there was haggling over a price.

Procurers or panders existed, of course. These intermediaries between the courtesan and her patrons might be state officers or owners of the prostituted slaves or agents of the free prostitutes. In some cases they were relatives. A mother might deliver over her daughter or a husband, his wife.

Most often in antiquity the prostitutes were handled by people who thought of them as goods which should bring a profit to the purchaser. They were sold with other slaves in the market-place. No consideration for their feelings was manifested in the transaction. Prospective customers examined them carefully. Speculators sometimes rented a woman to a pander or to one who desired a mistress.

The prostitute was supposed to satisfy all the demands of the libido. In ancient literature there are references to sadists and masochists, and to the special arrangements made for them in brothels. Almost all the desires which now appear to us to be perversions or symptoms of sexual psychopathia were considered reasonable and natural by the ancients. So long as no excess was practiced, indulgence in almost any pleasure was considered proper.

Many books which would now be considered dangerously pornographical circulated freely among the ancients. For instance, there were many treatises on the "figures of

Venus", the various ways of carrying out coition. Our medical authorities on sex say that the proper exercise of the function is not instinctively acquired by men. However, even in works intended for physicians, there is seldom any discussion of the right way or the right ways. The Greeks had many gods, but we worship one whom they did not know — Ignorance.

Scientifically, to be sure, they were inferior to us. However, if they knew something, they did not conceal it because it was supposedly offensive to religion. What good is it to the citizens of a free and democratic country to have scientific discoveries made, if they are carefully to be hidden from all students, on the ground that they contradict what is stated in certain holy books?

The Greeks, although they actually knew less than we, made better use of their knowledge. It is sometimes surprising to find out the gaps in their science. Thus, it is pretty sure that both gonorrhea and chancroids were common diseases in ancient times. Yet the Greek and Roman physicians seem not in the least to have suspected that these diseases were transmitted in the act of coition. They knew that certain diseases were contagious. In fact, they cautioned men against having relations with women who were afflicted with eczema, leprosy, or certain other easily-recognized illnesses.

As we have seen, the bath and the brothel were often adjoining places and occasionally the same place. The Greeks anointed themselves with oil before any physical exercise. This fact probably often prevented a venereal infection.

The ancients were, for their own sake, careful about the physical cleanliness of the prostitute. For her mental and moral cleanliness they concerned themselves little.

She was a useful object, a religious object, for at least this reason, that she insured the sanctity of the home. A splendid harlot might be given luxuries, but it would be as though a champion race-horse were given an expensive stall. Except in the case of the few hetaera who aroused romantic love, the prostitutes were hardly considered to be persons.

The regulation of prostitution by the police as it prevails today in many European cities, according to Iwan Bloch, is a system of inscribing the courtesans on a slave list. In some cases the harlots have been exposed almost without restriction to the tyrannies of certain officials. There are pictured such conditions in Hugo's "Les Miserables".

In one form or another the slavery of prostitutes has existed uninterruptedly from ancient times to our own. We all know what "white slavery" means. The Italian padrones in New York formerly held young girls in subjection under conditions pretty much resembling those of antique slavery, except that the legal justification did not exist. I see no reason to agree with Dr. Bloch that modern "white slavery'" is an outgrowth or result of ancient conditions. For one matter, the problem of recruiting the slaves has become an altogether different one.

So long as brothels exist, there will probably be some sort of slavery. There will be some sort of domination of the weak will by the strong will. Always the lone prostitute has had her bully or "protector", the man on whom she has lavishly poured her affections and her booty.

In Greece the prostitute's bully was the state, which took her earnings or a share in them. There was a whole class of Collectors of the Prostitutes' Revenue. The

courtesan who did not belong to the state paid a monthly tax which amounted to her usual fee for her favors. If the sexual phenomena of today are somewhat different from those of yesterday and if the conditions of tomorrow appear likely to be different from those of today, this is due most of all to the gradual decline of the double standard of sexual morality. This dual set of rules of conduct, accepted without question by the Greeks and Romans of classical times, is coming more and more to be questioned. So long as women are climbing firmly to a position of equality with (possibly of superiority to) men, we can be sure that the old measuring rods will go.

In addition to the double standard just mentioned, classical prostitution rested on the distinction between those who needed to work and those who were too noble and too proud to do any manual or certain kinds of mental labor. Thus there was normally a deep gulf, a. deeper gulf even than exists with us, between a man's wife and the harlots of whom he was fond. Yet men were known to marry prostitutes, even in Greece. More frequently they took them to themselves as concubines or mistresses.

Despite the shameful position of the prostitute, she played in ancient India, Greece, and Rome a greater role than the legitimate wife. Whereas the wife had to stay at home and supervise the cooking and the care of the young children, the courtesan conversed freely with many men. If she was intelligent, she might have it in her power to sway the destinies of a state. At any rate, she was permitted a wide range of interests. If she had the desire and the ability to join in philosophical discussions, she was welcome to do so! She could be praised by all, toasted by all, greeted by all men with honors and with gifts. A good wife, by way of contrast, was one who herself remained silent and about whom nothing good and nothing bad was ever said.

Any reader of this booklet who is familiar with many comedies of the Elizabethan age will recall that the favorite setting is a brothel or a boisterous tavern. This setting was borrowed, along with a number of other things, from the Latin comedy; and this, in turn, from the Greek. The ancients were not shocked, as the New York authorities have been in the case of "*The God of Vengeance*," to see a brothel on the stage. The hetaera was the heroine of many a Greek comedy. The mimes have already been mentioned, in which the parts of harlots were taken, realistically enough, by the harlots themselves.

A great deal about the prostitutes of Greece in the time of the Roman Empire is to be learned from the satirical dialogues of Lucian and the imaginary letters of his contemporary Alciphron. Both the great and the little writers of antiquity discussed sex freely, and many of the literary works were frankly intended to be aphrodisiac.

This purpose is referred to in ancient medical works. The same thing was true in all the branches on ancient art. Phallic symbols exist today in great numbers, but only the initiated recognize them as such. In ancient times, when the symbols were still more numerous, everyone knew what they meant. Many great artists worked at paintings and decorations intended for the walls of a brothel. Artistic representations of the nude, which were many, did not usually have any erotic significance.

It has happened since classical times that a painter or a sculptor has used as model for a sacred work of art a woman herself not saintly. A good many of the Greek statutes of Aphrodite were modelled after well-known courtesans. Since the goddess of love had no need to look ascetic, there was nothing strange about this. The gods and goddesses of Homer and the Greek dramatists were not aloof from humanity, and they were themselves quite susceptible to the normal passions of mankind.

{This essay was first published in 1925}

Pictorial: A Pomegranate … from a Better Angle …

During the week, every afternoon at 2 like clockwork he ventured down to take a coffee break at the coffee shop just around the corner from his apartment as well as relax as he read the newspapers that were there for the patrons: the London Times, the New York Times, some newspapers from Europe in French, German, Spanish and Italian, and the local Shanghai broadsheets. He took his time to glance at them all since he understood these languages and this gave him the chance to practice his comprehension. Occasionally there was a news article about him.

Today there was one about him in a Berlin newspaper. He read the story, smiled then turned to the next page of the *Arts & Culture* section of the newspaper.

He never read the first section or two of the foreign newspapers. He was not interested in what was going on in the world. It was all bad news anyway. He would always read the German newspapers last. For him German was his least favorite of his language for it was not as musical and romantic as French, Italian and Spanish. He had spent several years studying the piano at *Conservatoires* in France and Italy when he was in his twenties. Now he was a decade older and had already began to wax nostalgically at how simple his life was while studying at the *Conservatoires*, before he started to perform on stage in front of live audiences.

He spent so much of his time practicing that sometimes it was hard for him not to see himself as nothing more than a fancifully trained monkey.

She had approached him and said hello in Mandarin, with an interesting edge to it. He smirked at her. He knew that not just anyone could enter and partake at this

coffee shop. You had to be a member of the *Shanghai Coffee Club* which meant you had to be vetted by the authorities. He had never seen her in the coffee shop before. This gave him a clue that perhaps she was just an ordinary admirer of his. She had probably snuck past the guard he thought. So be it. That didn't bother him all that much for he was famous, and a famous man meets many women who were, shall we say, adventurous …

She had struck up a conversation with him by saying how much she had enjoyed a recent performance he had given and in particular the virtuosity he had displayed performing a particularly moody Nocturne by Chopin.

He smiled. "This piece was one of his favorites," she told her.

"I can see why," she said as she smiled back. "I have tried to learn how to play it but gave up after two months."

"It took me a year to master the piece." He responded, being polite. In fact he had mastered the piece in just days. Still he tries to play it better every chance he gets.

"So there is hope for me yet?" she replied.

He nodded. "Here let me buy you a coffee." He turned towards the counter and lifted his hand to signal. The woman behind the counter nodded her head. He felt the woman's hand on his arm and turned back to face her.

"Oh sorry …" she removed her hand from his arm. "There is no need … I can order for myself …"

He smiled, “no let me … I don’t mind.”

The coffee shop woman was now standing beside him. “This young woman would like to order something ....”

“May I see your membership card miss,” the coffee shop woman asked officiously.

There was an awkward pause of a second or two before he spoke up. “ … She’s on my bill. I have invited her to join me.”

The coffee shop woman looked up at the door guard but he had his back turned to her so she quickly nodded, took the order and scurried back to the counter.

He chortled. “She’s a nervous type … while you are not. You don’t have a card do you?””

She slowly shook her head.

“Don’t worry I won’t turn you in!” he reassured her.

They chatted some more. He tried to make out her accent. It was not mainland, nor Taiwanese, nor was it Macau … finally he asked.

“Vancouver … just visiting. I saw you walk into this coffee shop so I chanced it.”

He admired her openness and courage. “What do you do in Vancouver?”

“I am a teacher …” she said elusively.

“What do you teach?” he asked.

“This and that …” she seemed oblique to him, but that didn’t matter she was both pretty and pretty available.

After they had finished their coffee he invited her up to his place. Their flirting led to intimacy. He played her their favorite Nocturne while she straddled him. They came together at the *Deo gratias*. Then she left him as quickly as she could.

That didn’t really bother him. His ecstasy had given him the vigour to try out a rather unique interpretation of a few bars of this Nocyurne by Chopin. For the first time he got it to his satisfaction, and had her to thank for this.

It was only after she had gone before he realized he did not even know her name.

He did however come across her again, but not at the coffee shop mind you. It was at a performance at the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver seven years later. After the encore of his performance he had stood at the front of the stage and as he took his bow he had noticed her four rows back and to one side, glowing angelically.

When he looked up at her she had smiled and waved at him. Somehow she knew he had recognized her. Sitting beside her, hardly noticeable in a sea of adult heads, was a little boy. She pointed at him. In a split second he understood.

He blushed. The little boy looked just like him when he was his age. Then she blew him a kiss. He turned back to the piano and played their favourite Chopin piece with such tenderness that she began to cry and her son asked her why. "Shhh Nocturne… your papa is playing the piano."

He heard her clearly across the hollowness of the room!

When he had finished the Nocturne he stood and hesitated then walked to the corner of the stage and down into the audience, pushing past the stream of strangers who wanted to shake his hand until he was standing beside her and their little boy. She had tried to make their escape but the surge of people made that impossible. He himself hardly noticed the presence of anyone else but her and the little boy.

Then he was standing beside her. He hugged her and then grabbed hold of her hand not letting her pull free from him. He motioned back to the stage. She grabbed hold of her young son's hand and the three of them swam against the surge.

When they got onto the stage he sat down at the piano and invited her to sit on one side of him and the little boy on the other. Then he started to play Mendelssohn's *Frühlingslied*. He was a few bars into the piece when the little boy raised his hands to the keys and edged him aside and began to play with such tenderness and expertise he started to cry with joy. You could hear a pin drop in the theater for everyone had come to a stop and listened intently to his playing.

When the little boy was finished playing the room was utterly silent. No one had ever seen a young boy play *Frühlingslied* with such veracity and meaning.

“He has often wondered who his father was. Now Nocturne knows.”

Almost on queue the remaining audience began to applause. The little boy took scared and ran to his mother and hugged her close.

Not known for his modesty, he found it odd to hear himself say … “Nocturne plays the piano much better than I did when I was his age.”

She smiled and nodded.

I don’t even know your name,” he suddenly found himself asking.

“Evette …” she whispered.

“Do you have a last name?” He queried.

“Just Evette …” She smirked as she said this and started to lead her son off the stage.

“Don’t go. I must talk with you.” He pleaded.

“Not here … not now.” She looked around the stage.

“Where and when … then?” He felt frantic.

“Tomorrow perhaps …” She hesitated when she said this.

“How about now … tonight?” He started to panic.

She put her arm around her son's shoulder. "I have to take Nocturne home. Tomorrow noon."

He frowned. "I leave tomorrow evening at eight."

"Where to?" she asked nonchalantly.

"To Paris and my next performance." He lowered his head as he said this. "I could cancel my next performance and stay a day or two longer."

She laughed at his utterance and shook her head. She paused before asking him "where are you staying?

"The Fairmont Vancouver … room 1102." He whispered.

"I will come and knock on the door of room 1102 at noon tomorrow."

Now he did not feel so frantic. He looked down at the little boy and smiled at him. He sort of smiled back and then they walked away to the stairs at the corner of the stage and then up the aisle … neither of them looking back.

The last fifteen minutes had overturned his life and left him in a strange state.

She kept her word. The following day there was a knock at his door at exactly 12 o'clock.

When he opened the door her first reaction to him was “you look awful. Are you feeling ok?”

This caught him off guard. He hadn’t slept that night and hadn’t even left his room. He nodded. He ushered her in.

She shook her head. “I have reserved a table at a small restaurant around the corner.”

“I had hoped we could have a nice quiet lunch here in my room.”

She shook her head and was quite candid with him. “I am ovulating and well remember what happened the last time we spent an intimate afternoon together …” Evette turned and walked smartly back to the elevator. “Take your time getting yourself ready. I will wait for you down in the lobby.”

He reluctantly joined her in the lobby and they dashed up the street for lunch. It was a fancy French restaurant tucked within an upscale boutique hotel. She had arranged for a quiet and private table in an alcove opposite both the entrance and the kitchen.

“I imagine you have a thousand questions you want to ask me,” she said even as the waitress stepped away with their order.

He nodded.

“But I will save you a great deal of frustration by telling you what I can tell you.”

It intrigued him the way she said ‘can tell you.’

“What does that really mean?”

“It means … there is really little I am able to tell you.”

“Why didn’t you contact me to tell me about our son?”

“You mean my son … I carried him within me and pushed him into my world.” She said this with a distant demeanour that he found odd.

He hesitated before continuing. “Is everything fine? Do you need any money?”

“No everything is being looked after …” She turned away from him as she said this, then looked carefully around the little restaurant.

He looked over his shoulder but didn’t see anything out of the usual. It looked like he had not been recognized. He turned back to face her. “I read in the Vancouver Sun about my concert. It said that the journalist wanted to interview you about …” he was about to say our son before he corrected himself, “ … Nocturne. But it said you refused.”

She nodded.

“Why did you do that? I thought you would be proud of Nocturne …”

“I am proud of him … but I am not allowed to publicize him until he is ready.”

“Not allowed?” That sounds silly. He played Mendelssohn’s *Frühlingslied* perfectly.”

“It’s an easy piece for him ...”

“Easy? At his age?”

“Yes. Nocturne has an IQ of 185. So does my other son … I only have an I.Q. of 165 …”

The fact they were smart were no surprise. “You have another son?”

She nodded. “I actually have three boys. The oldest is twelve, Nocturne is six and my youngest son is just a few months old. I am still breast feeding him … so I can’t stay long for lunch.”

He felt compelled to ask. “Three sons … three different fathers?”

She nodded but didn’t say anything.

He looked down at the table in silence.

“So I was just … you know …”

“Just what?”

“A donor of sorts.”

She nodded.

“All this seems odd …”

Before she could say anything the waitress arrived with their *soupe a l’onion*.

When they were again alone she whispered. “*You were matched with me*.”

Her five simple words added to the strangeness of things.

“What do you mean matched with me?”

“Genetically … and perhaps even epigenetically …” she said between spoonful of her soup.

“By whom?”

“If I told you would you promise not to tell anyone?” she said with guile

He pushed his soup away from in front of him. He had suddenly lost his appetite.

“You have to promise …” she stopped eating her soup as well.

“Why?”

“They will not appreciate the publicity.” She said sternly. Besides I would get into trouble … and so would *your son* Nocturne.”

The words ‘*your son*’ took on an ominous tone.

“I don’t know what this is all about … I just play the piano.”

“And play it very well … that’s what it is about.” She looked at him directly in the eyes. Her eyes lacked sparkle and warmth. They seem distant and tired.

“I don’t understand … is that why you seduced me … so we could have a baby?”

“How much have you made performing? Millions and millions …”

“So you want some of my wealth do you … for Nocturne.”

She shook her head.

He shook his just as the waitress came to take up the soup bowls. “Was the onion soup not to your liking?” she inquired. “I am about to bring your *Sole Normandie*.”

She turned to the waitress and said “the soup was nice. It’s just that neither of us have an appetite at the moment. Perhaps you can bring us the desert menu and some coffee?”

Then they were again alone.

“Someone did a genomic typing of me and found I have a near perfect genome. I don’t carry diseases like diabetes, asthma, heart disease, cancer and the like. Didn’t someone do a genomic typing of you when you were at the *Conservatoire* in Paris …”

He shook his head.

“Well that’s what I was told …”

“They ran our genomic code through a computer program and found us to be a perfect match.”

“Who are they …”

She frowned.

“Or can I not ask that?”

She shook her head.

He looked around the restaurant. “They must be very powerful.”

He shook her head again.

“What then?” He was not one prone to conspiracy theories but a shiver went up his back when he asked this.

“It’s not a humongous transnational organization if that is what you are thinking.” She whispered.

“I’m confused then … if it is not big … but it is powerful … what are you saying?”

“They just don’t want to be found out. They are trying to do something rather important for humanity.”

“What is that?”

“Medical science will not be able to cure every human disease. As the population of the Earth continues to double every thirty years or so, so will the incidence of human disease. You can see that already in cognitive decline, mental illness and heart disease.”

“So it is a group of doctors is it?”

“Some are, but most are scientists. The father of my oldest boy is a rather intelligent mathematician.”

“And your youngest son … who is his father?” he asked scornfully.

“A biochemist and horticulturalist. Don’t be so cross with me. ”

“You used me!”

“At the time you seemed to be enjoying yourself.” She put him in his place.

He was silent for a moment as he tried to ponder what to ask her next. "What do they call themselves?"

"*Consortia* …" she said.

"*Consortia* …" he repeated.

She nodded.

"And where can I find this *Consortia*?"

"You don't find them … they find you."

"So you are not one of them?"

She shook her head. "Not really. When I was in grad school I was approached to be part of a genomic study. I agreed to let some profs do a genetic make-up of me. I guess they noticed something special about me."

"Something special?"

Just then the waitress arrived with their coffees and the desert menu. She ordered a triple chocolate cheesecake and he ordered a mille feuilles.

She waited until the waitress was gone before continuing. "I never tire and never need much sleep. Just a few hours each day. And I have an efficient metabolism. They were curious why … I guess they found their answers."

"I am a little bit like that too." He acknowledged

"So they noticed … That's one of the reasons they matched us together."

"So why did you come and you know … seduce me?"

"They paid me to do it. If I got pregnant with your child they would give me $ 250,000. If I delivered the baby they would give me another $ 250,000. And they would pay all the costs of raising and home schooling him until he was sixteen."

"Wow … why the home schooling?" he was curious.

"Nocturne doesn't go to a normal school. He has piano lessons twice a day and also learns his normal schooling."

"I take it this is the same for your eldest, except its mathematics for him right?"

She nodded. "They were both brought into the world after thirty two weeks, born naturally through induced labour. That is one of the reasons why their I.Q.s are so high. Now they are mentored to excel at their predestined professions."

"I came into the world early too, and my parents mentored my musical talents."

She nodded acknowledgement before she continued. "But I can't say my son's immune systems are fully developed. That is one of the reasons they are homeschooled. This is to keep them safe from harm."

"So what is this *Consortia* trying to do, create some super-soldier?"

"Oh no … you are not listening. Mathematician, musician, biochemist and horticulturalist ... no super-soldiers here! I would never want my sons to become soldiers. Which mother would?"

The waitress delivered their deserts and topped up their coffees then left them alone.

"So what is the *Consortia* doing then?" he continued.

"When our society starts to crumble we might have another dark age." She whispered. She enjoyed a mouth full of her triple chocolate cheesecake.

"And when does the Consortia consider this may happen?"

"They think it has already begun. Looks what is happening around the world."

"It seems to me what we see around the world is the same old … same old …"

"Well at least my sons will be well looked after."

"And where does that leave you or I?" he asked Evette.

“I guess we shall have to fend for ourselves, won’t we?” She had finished her cheesecake. He hadn’t even touched his.

She looked at her watch. “I only have a few more minutes to spare then I must go.”

“Will I see you again?”

“Only if they needed another piano player …” she said haughtily. She stood. “Don’t worry about the bill it has all been looked after.”

He could not bring himself to stand, nor even to look up at her. In the space of a few hours he had found out he had a son, and now it looked like he would not see the two of them ever again.

She stopped beside him and placed her hand on his shoulder. This reminded him of the first time she had touched him at the *Shanghai Coffee Shop*. He placed his hand atop hers and squeezed.

She squeezed back. “I know you love women and that women adore you. If you want your own sons you know what you should do …”

Then she was gone. After a few minutes the waitress came to see how he was doing. He hadn’t moved or even touched his cheesecake.

“Is everything ok?” she asked him.

He turned his head and smiled weakly.

“I recognize you,” the waitress said. “You are the pianist who performed last night at the Orpheum.

He nodded sadly.

“I particularly enjoyed your last encore and the little boy who came to pay Mendelssohn with you.”

“You were there were you?”

She nodded. “Listen I got off at two. Perhaps we can have a cup of coffee together. I would love to chat with you about music. I particularly love Chopin.”

He looked up at her broad hips. A thought came to mind. “Do you like Sole Normandie?”

“Yes … it’s my fav.” She said reaching back and tousled her hair.

He set down his serviette and stood. “I am in room 1102 at the Fairmont Hotel. If you want to chat about music what say you bring the Sole Normandie over?”

She started to clear away the table and watched as he walked out of the restaurant.

Less than an hour later they were both listening to Chopin on his cd player and were floundering about in each other’s arms.

Pictorial: The Ultimate Selfie

I Have Made a Big Mistake by Yumi

[**Busan**] I have made a big mistake and now I am trying to come to terms with it. I am thirty, newly married and had a tryst with a friend just before I was married. The tryst was a few days before my marriage. Now I know I have made a big mistake … but it is not what you think it is. Don't judge me until you have read my entire story. Perhaps then you will understand …

Yumi is not my real name. If I gave you my real name then my husband and my family might find me out and then I would have hell to pay. Yet I want my story to be told.

Life has not been simple nor easy for me. I was the youngest of three with two brothers older than me from my father's first marriage. They were both small, near sighted and wore glasses and were Otaku-nerds. They did not have a social life outside of their circle of nerd friends.

My father was always away on business. My mother had given up her career to be a house wife to look after our family. She worked hard and I tried to help her as best I can. In high school I was a 'so-so' student and was not good enough to get into university. For a few years after graduating high school I found odd-jobs to earn some money but it was never enough for me to move out and live on my own. The economy was so bad and there were few jobs for new graduates.

Then one afternoon I saw my father with a young woman on his arm. She was about my age. I watched and followed them as they entered a 'Love Hotel.' I had taken

my cellphone out and had filmed them together, then waited until they had finished and were leaving. I filmed them a second time as my father kissed her.

It was then that he saw me filming them and ran out into the street yelling my name. He wasn't looking where he was going and a truck struck him down. He was unconscious for a month before he died. I ran home, tears in my eyes. When I arrived home a policeman was at the front door talking with my mother. They sort of thought I was crying because my father had been in an accident.

I never told my mother what I had seen nor what had happened. The girl he had been with never came forward. She disappeared into the crowd – which told me she was not his 'girlfriend.' I know that young girls sometimes search out a sugar-daddy to help them out. After all, life can be expensive. They had only been in the 'Love Hotel' for twenty minutes. They could not have been in love could they? Maybe I am harsh in judging the girl … as for my step father … karma is karma!

I felt guilty but not because my father had died (he had killed himself by his recklessness). I felt guilty because I did not tell my mother what I had seen nor what had happened. Nor did I tell her about the times he tried to invade my privacy just to see me naked. My two step brothers were like that too.

A few months after my father died and the insurance company had settled up it was obvious there was not enough money for my mother to continue to be a home body. She found a part time job at a local super market. My father's two sons were a lost cause. My mother tried as best she could to push them 'into the world' but they fought her tooth and nail. They are both now in their thirties and have yet to have a real job and a real girlfriend. I know they masturbate at least twice a day.

It was evident to me that I would have to look after my own needs. I had some high school friends who had come to Canada on a working holiday and one of them, when she heard my father had died, invited me to come stay with her. My mother thought it was a good idea and so she bought me a plane ticket, helped me pack my bags and sent me on my way. She said an adventure would do me good.

That was four years ago. I have not been back to Japan since.

My experiences in Canada have been interesting! It is a country that is both modern in some ways and backwards in others. There is lots of freedom for women in Canada, yet it is technologically backwards and culturally immature.

I love the freedom that I have, a freedom which took me years to get accustomed to. I no longer notice the backwardness of technology in Canada (I have surrounded myself with the things that I need as a 21st century person) but I am constantly reminded of the cultural immaturity of Canadians. For instance I don't understand why people just throw their garbage on the ground when they can put it in a garbage can.

My friend worked at a Japanese restaurant. She got me a job as a server. She had to lend me a Kimono to wear since I did not have one of my own. I did not even know how to wear a kimono properly. It took me weeks and weeks before I felt comfortable wearing one and carrying the food and well just doing my job.

My job was tedious and sometimes very annoying. Canadian men are crazy about Japanese women. Many of them think that Japanese women are nymphomaniacs.

They think that all they had to do is ask and we will toppled onto our backsides, spread our legs and enjoy being ravished by them. On occasion the cooks in the kitchen had to act like our older brothers with the unruly and drunken patrons.

I wasn't paying close enough attention while the head chef at our restaurant began to seduce me. He comes from Busan in Korea (at our restaurant the servers were all Japanese women, the entire kitchen staff were all Korean men). For two years I never went out on dates with Canadian men and before I knew it the head chef and I were a couple and I had moved in with him. That was two years ago. Those two years have seen ups and downs until one day he suggested we just get married.

I have to admit I would like to have a baby but he told me just a few weeks ago he is not too keen about the idea. I just recently found out why. This is the main reason why I have decided to share with you my story.

I was a virgin when we had sex for the first time two years ago. After he penetrated me … and then left me unsatisfied … I asked and he told me he had had sex with several Korean girls before he had sex with me. The one thing I can tell you right up front is that Korean men have short and small penises, and that Korean women have small vaginas. That is just the way it is. As you probably guessed I have seen the penises of my two step brothers and they were small too (which is one of the reasons they did not hit it off with girls … *their toys are too tiny*).

I, on the other hand, am not so small. I am taller than he is and until a few months ago I did not fully realize just how small Korean men are compared to Canadian men. My boyfriend who would become my fiancé, and is now my husband, was the only boy I have ever had intercourse with …

How did I find out how big Canadian men are compared to Korean men (and most Japanese men as well). A few days before I was married I decided to throw good sense to the wind and throw myself a bachelorette party. I had had an official pre-wedding party in the formal Korean tradition and the formal Japanese tradition, but I had heard about what a bachelorette was and so unbeknown to my fiancé and our friends I snuck out to enjoy an afternoon with an artist friend I had met online.

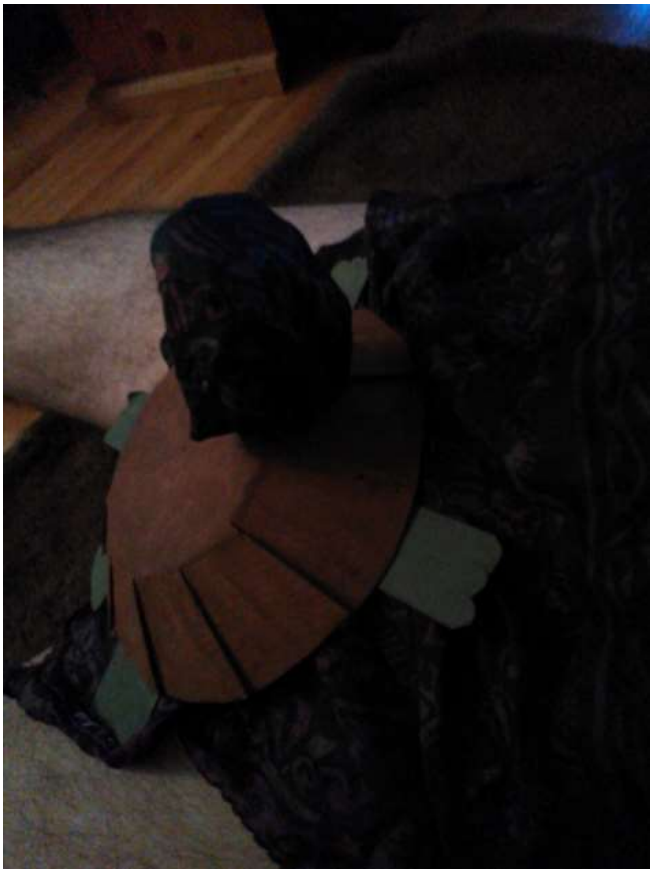
We had known each other for three months, zooming several times to chat, and I have to admit I went in search of this adventure. He is light hearted and kind and did not mind being my play thing. I told him how I used to draw when I was in school and missed doing art. I asked him whether he could be my bachelorette gift for an afternoon. He said that would be fun and he let me plan my own party.

On the afternoon we were to meet up I asked him to pick up some sushi and to put it into his refrigerator for later. When we met up we went for a short walk. It was nice to finally meet him in person. He was older than me and had once been married but had been divorced for a decade. We talked pleasantly as we walked to his studio and my party. When we were settled in and he had made us some green tea he smiled and said "what's next?"

I asked me to let me undress him, which he let me do. This was the first time I had seen the penis of a Canadian man … It was much bigger, twice as big and twice as long than the penises I had seen so far in my life.

Then I asked him to sit while I drew him. He was beautiful. The most beautiful man I had seen in my life … which got me to wonder about many things …

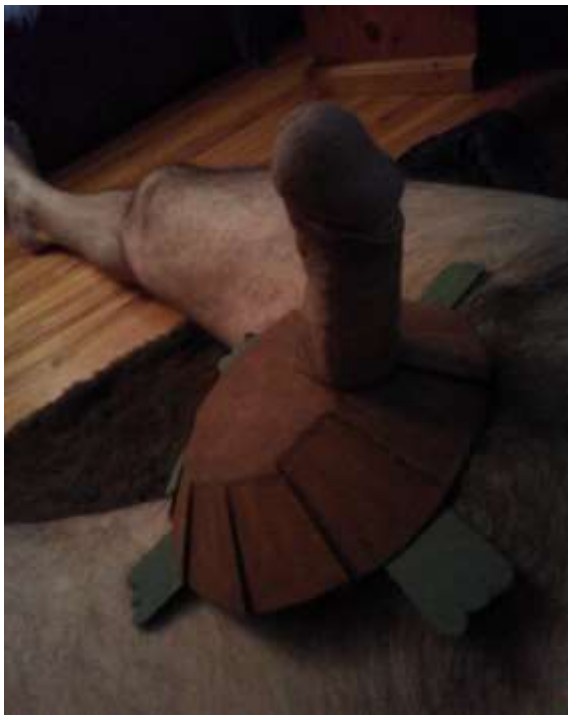
Next it was time to take the sushi out and enjoy *nantaimori* … which is when a man becomes the table off which a women eats her sushi. I blind folded him and got him to lie down on a rug. I had made something for him to wear over his penis, a turtle shell, while I teased him (we had done this at the thirtieth birthday party of a girl friend and I wanted to enjoy this teasing for myself – at her birthday she was the only one allowed to *tease the turtle*). I wrapped his penis in a silk cloth and placed the turtle shell over him, his penis being the turtle's neck and head. Here are some pictures I took.



As I teased him he became more and more aroused.

I ate the sushi with my mouth lifting each piece off his body with my lips. I also fed him a piece from time to time, our lips touching for a brief second each time I did this. .

I had never seen a man so long and so stiff as he was after I had teased him.



I felt courageous and empowered. I lifted the turtle off his penis. I got him to stand and bind-fold me so that I could caress and explore his body. He let me do this and so he became my living sculpture … he was warm and soft all over.

It fascinated me to feel so much soft hair. Asian men do not have hair on their bodies, except near their penises and that hair is rough and wiry. This is a drawing I drew later.

I took his penis in my hand. It was so soft and warm … hot even, much hotter than my fiancé's penis ever got.

Then I asked him to undress me which he did ever so slowly, teasing me in a most sensuous fashion. Then he set down a blanket on the floor. I told him I wanted to be teased and so he began to tickle me with a long stem paint brush.

I had expected him to massage me but this tickling was much more than I expected. It was exquisite (how exquisite you can only know by letting someone do this to you).

He drove me crazy, tickling the most sensitive places all over my body. Then suddenly for the first time in my life I had an orgasm. And not just one but wave after wave after wave.

It was as if a life time of sexual suppression suddenly was released from within me.

I started to cry and my friend took me into his arms. He brushed my hair away from my face, looked into my eyes and asked me why I was crying. I tried to explain to him the reasons, partly was because of the happiness he had brought me, but partly it was because I realized that in a few days, when I am married, I will not be able to enjoy such pleasures with my husband. His penis was just too small and he was never romantic with me.

My resolve to marry started to unravel at that instant and my friend sensed this. He then did something that I will thank him for the rest of my life. He told me that as a woman I have the right to seek out my own pleasures as a woman… that married men do that all the time and so married women should do that as well … this was equitable and fair. "*Now is the time for you to marry isn't it?*"

I looked up into his eyes and then reached down and pulled his penis to just so that it was touching my vagina. Then I painted my soft skin with his soft skin until I shuddered. The effect on him was immediate and he had an orgasm too. Then we just laid silently side by side.

Ten days after this exquisite afternoon I was married, not once but twice, once in a Japanese ceremony in Kobe and a second time in a Korean ceremony in Busan. That was late last year … and I have been trying hard to become pregnant since then but nothing is happening.

So what is the big mistake I have made? When my husband was finally convinced to go get checked out by the doctor they told him he is infertile and will never be able to father a child. My husband admitted to me that he had suspected this for some time. I asked him why he hadn't told me this before we were married?

The day I painted my sex with my friend's penis I was ovulating. The mistake I made was not to push him inside me and let him father a child with me, for if I had I would now be holding a baby in my arms and well … I would be enjoying my greatest pleasure as a woman.

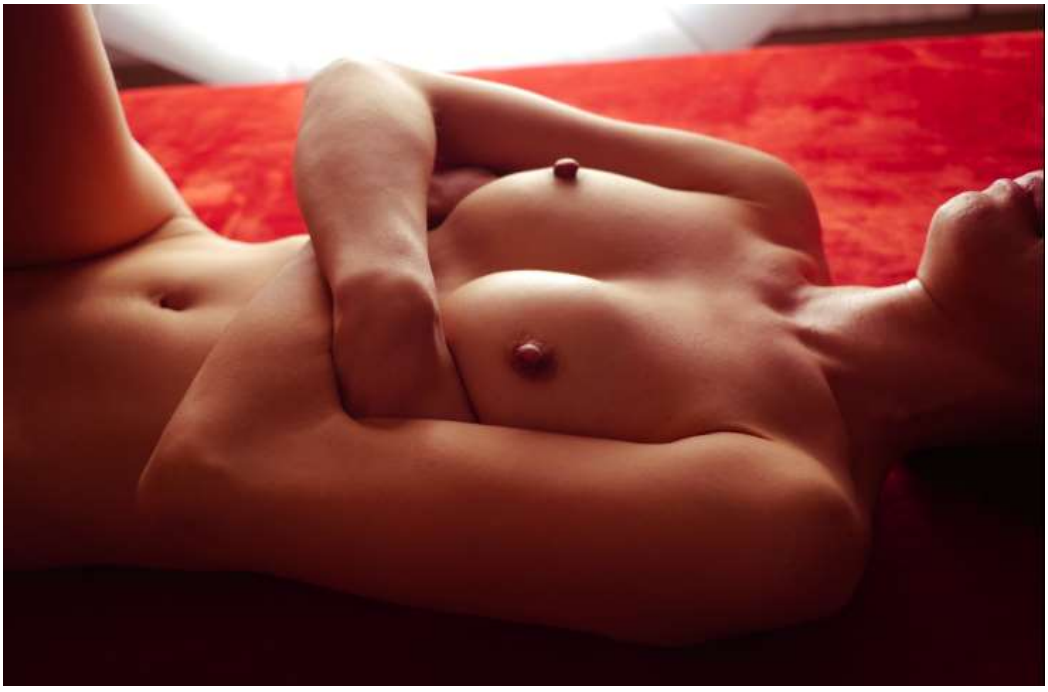
We live in Busan … a city I don't feel at home in. My husband has opened his own restaurant which is a gigantic struggle for us. I am very sullen and lonely,

My husband sees this and recently said we might be forced to return to Canada soon so we can work in our old restaurant.

If we do return I hope to see my friend again to spend many an afternoon with him ... painting a very different future.

Eros in Art

Red Velvet by Zak Ato



Zak Ato is a Californian digital art photographer who focuses on the feminine bodyscapes.

Pictorial: Marilyn Monroe dressed as Theda Bara!

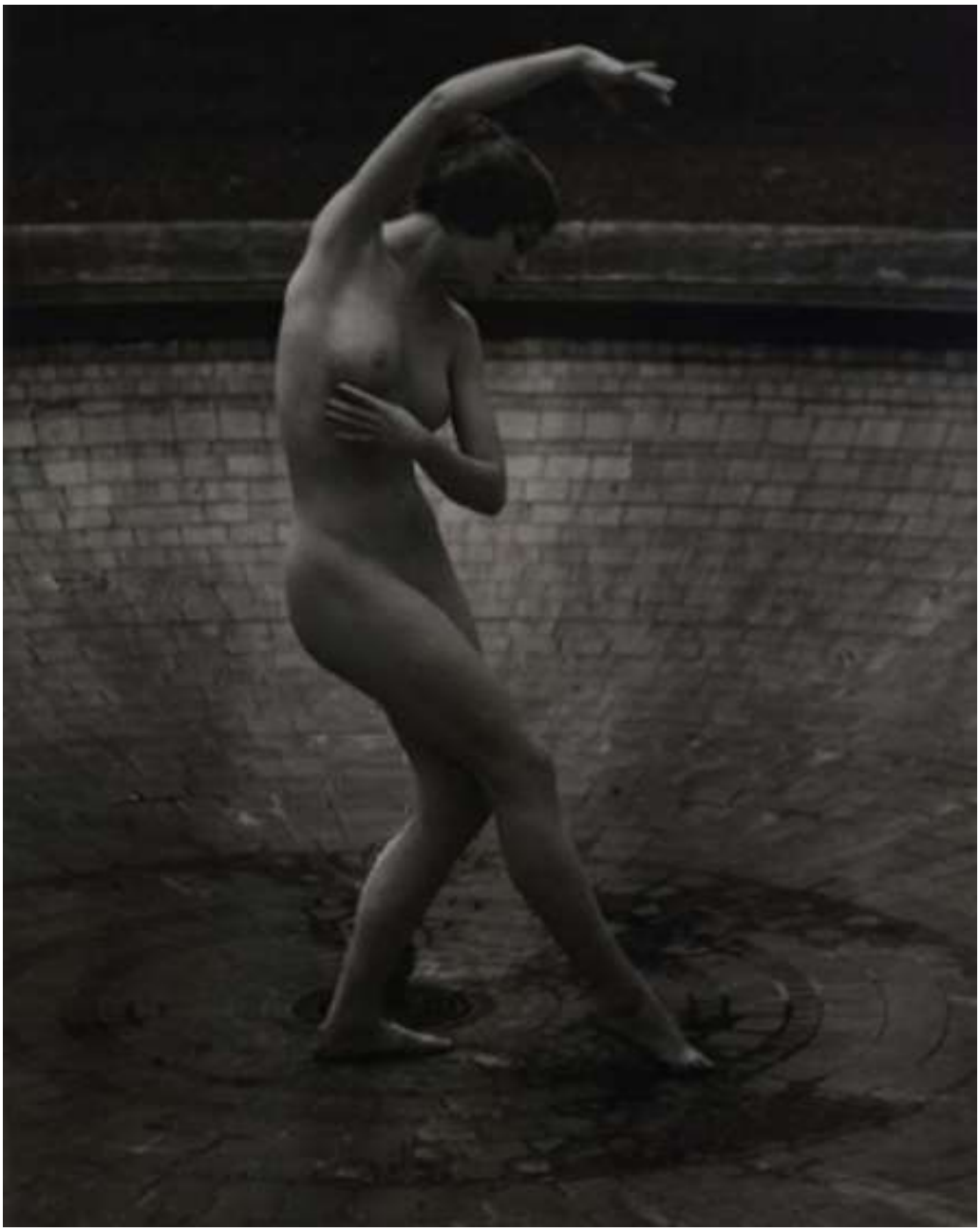
MARILYN MONROE AS THEDA BARA, PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON IN 1958

Figurative Photography by Arnold Genthe

Arnold Genthe- Lee Miller, 1920s

Arnold Genthe- Lee Miller, 1920s

Audrey Munson 1915



Something Very Weird … A Girl who Desires Her Own Penis …

[**Seattle**] There is an internet influencer in Seattle named *Indigo White*. Over the past few years she has drifted hither and thither in her wayward sexuality, arriving at a juncture where she has openly claimed she wants to give up her femininity and become a guy.

Why? She's a beautiful woman. Why would she want to give up being who she is?

Perhaps it is a belief that boys have more fun than girls? That's a mistake and there is one way to prove this.

A boy and a girl make love. A few minutes and the boy ejaculates and well that's it for him … one orgasm. You can tickle and tease a girl's clitoris for hours. The girl on the other hand can have how many orgasms … four, five, six! Get my drift?

In a video *Indigo White* talked about sticking a 'penis' to her body so that she can 'become a boy.'

Well … being a boy is not as simple as that, any more than being a girl something simple, as having no balls and a penis.

Some boys who want to be seen as a girl have their family jewels taken from then … they ask to become emasculated or castrated. I wonder if they have regrets.

Is a girl 'becoming a boy' as simple as gluing boy bits onto her body. We will let you be the judge …

Here *Indigo White* is holding up her silicone prosthesis …

You can see the beauty of her, which she wants to cover over.

Now she has to ‘glue it on …’

If it were really like a man’s family jewels it would literally be Shakespeare’s ‘pound of flesh …’ the flesh that Portia argued to save on her lover ...

It surprises many women when they ‘palm their lover’ how much a penis and two testicles weigh.

Fully engorged with blood a man’s penis and testicles weigh as much as a woman’s breast. His penis is where your clitoris is (it is his ‘analogue’) and his scrotum and testicle hangs down where your vagina and birth canal are …

Now a little dab will do it …

By the soft pink of her tulip you can see that *Indigo White* is aroused.

She doesn't want to stick the penis on her labia because that would be very uncomfortable. It is worse than having a Brazilian …

Now it is time to stick her penis on. The prosthesis has a real life like colour to it. Women think the colour pink only applies to them. Take a close look at your boyfriend's family jewels and you will notice more times than not they're pink too!

No … one size does not fit all. Her penis is a tad too big for her body size …

It’s hanging a bit too high on her body …

And voila …

She’s not bashful is she …

And from another angle … she glued her penis several inches too high.

Usually a boy’s penis is as long as their thumb. She likes big!

Now what is she up to? Yes *Indigo White* is definitely not bashful …

From this angle you can see that the penis is far too long and much too thick and the balls too small for her body size. Should we tell her … and spoil her fun? Nah!

As she moves her boy toy, hither and thither, she will be able to tickle her clitoris!

{*Blush …*}

Pictorial: Come and Join Me in My Bath

Some Nice Redheads

[**Los Angeles**] I have a friend who specializes in the pictorials of redheads!

She can tell a real ‘red head’ from a box type.

Can you figure how she does this?

Yup, you are right.

It is the soft tuff of hair ‘down there.’ It is most revealing. Before she agrees to do their photographs, she gets them to mail her a snippet of their public hair …

Clever girl!

Prologue to the Stories about sitting for Genthe by Susanna

[**New York**] The next few stories are written as recollections of my grandmother and some of her close friends. My grandmother and some of her close friends danced in the *Ziegfeld Follies* in the late 1920's until it was closed in 1931 due to the depression. They are all gone now and so it is left to me to share their reminiscences with you. I owe it to my grandmother and her friends.

As a girl of nine (I am in my thirties now) my grandmother introduced me to some of her friends at a tea following the funeral of one of their circle. When my grandmother introduced me to her friends as a 'dancer' they giggle like school girls and at my grandmother's insistence they opened up and started to share with me stories of their time during the '*Follies*.'

I use the terms '*Follies'* because their experiences did not begin nor end on the stage but carried through in a rather colorful fashion off stage as well.

The *Ziegfeld Follies* was an American version of *Les Follies Bergère* of Paris. The *Ziegfeld Follies* was the brain child of Florenz Ziegfeld and ran from 1907 to 1931. The '*Follies'* as the women who performed in them described it was a mixture of song and dance, burlesque, false glamour and sexploitation.

Much has been written about the song and dance, burlesque, false glamour but there is one thing that has been left out … the sexploitation.

It is interesting to notice that *Les Follies Bergère* are still being performed in Paris but it has been nearly a century since the *Ziegfeld Follies* were forced to close, never to open again. Perhaps this is because of Hollywood?

The sexploitation came in the way of how the women were chosen to perform on stage, what they performed, where they performed, and what happened after they left the *Ziegfeld Follies*. Many did not survive their moments in the lime light and ended up as alcoholics and fallen women. Many were treated for social diseases (which was the kiss of death … Ziegfeld had his girls sign on with a stage doctor whose job it was to make sure his girls were '*fit as a fiddle*.' Once a month the dancers had to spread their legs for him.) If you were afflicted you had to leave the show, no questions asked and no drama.

We know of many of the dancers today because of the figurative pictorials taken of them by Ziegfeld's *photographer in residence* Arnold Genthe.

Genthe's job was to not just publicize the girls while they performed, his job was to provide 'the boss' with titillating photographs of the girls so that he could choose a few new girls each month to join his 'Follies,' as some of his girls left the stage for a myriad of reasons.

If you wanted to go on stage you had first to appear in front of the camera. If the boss liked what he saw in the pictures then you had a couch call … if you were a virgin you were guaranteed a place on stage. The average performance time for a Ziegfeld girl was about two years – three if you really 'put-out.'

The next few stories are what I remember from the reminiscences of my grandmother and her friends. Theirs is an oral history of sitting for pictorials by Arnold Genthe. I apologize in advance if I might have forgotten some of their stories or maybe have misconstrued what it was they were trying to say. They were not a bashful group … but I was only nine at the time and perhaps they did not want to cause me to blush, or spill my tea on my nice dress.

Perhaps in the future I will convey their stories about their experiences onstage and off. These are their stories about how they got called onto the stage.

Arnold Genthe, self-portrait, 1900

Genthe started photography at the turn of the twentieth century. Genthe was very much like Egon Schiele, who he admired. At the beginning of his photography he did some of the first 'color pictures' done in America. He used glass plates and a giant box camera that could be wheeled around his studios. His studios, were small inexpensive spaces in brownstone buildings. He usually met his models at a coffee shop nearby and then 'escorted' them up into his studio. By the time he entered his

creative space with his models he usually was ‘arm in arm’ with them and knew them by their first name. Rarely did he do repeat sessions with models merely because there was no pay in doing this. Genthe took photos of girls at a number of dancing schools.

Genthe worked off plates and did his own negative as well as print developing. Here is a lovely picture he took of one of his models peeking into his camera.

My grandmother sat for Arnold Genthe when she was in her middle-teens. She performed in 1930 and 1931 and was there the night the curtain came down at the *Ziegfeld Follies* for the final time in 1931.

Sitting for Arnold Genthe by Alice

[**New York**] Can you guess how old I am in this picture? If you guessed right then you will understand why Genthe got me to wear a mask over my face.

I was a dancer at one of the New York schools. He was known as '*The Photographer*.' He asked me and I said yes … I don't know why I did. I felt better behind the mask, then I wasn't totally naked. After he gave me a print and promised he would smash the plate. Obviously he didn't smash it, did he!

My Mother Made Me Do It! by Sarah

[**New York**] You won't believe me but it was my mother who put me up to this. She said it would help 'my career.' I was just fourteen at the time.

This was the first time I was ever naked in front of a man. I had butterflies in my stomach. The whole photography session took fifteen minutes but it felt like hours. I turned away so that I was not looking into the camera. My mother is the woman holding up the square of work to block the shine off my face.

Genthe gave a print of this picture to Mr. Zeigfeld but I was never called in for an interview. I guess I wasn't his type … Genthe had promised he would destroy the negative, but obviously he didn't.

In for a penny … in for a pound, I suppose. A few years later I sat for some artists at the Guild here in New York. I was twenty at the time. The sessions started with me fully clothed in a skimpy dancer's costume. Then one day I found the courage to expose the top half of me to the students, mostly women.

The instructor told me that if I didn't go all the way the next session they would drop me and so the next session I did. I dropped my drawers. Just for fun that day the instructor posed a man with me up on the podium. He didn't tell me in advance he would do this. That was the first time I saw what a man looked like … really close up. For the last half-hour the instructor had us take up the pose of the famous sculpture the *Lovers*.

He was handsome! After our drawing session he and I went for drinks ... our night together ended the following morning with waffles … I got pregnant! That ended my modeling career. He went back to his wife in Philadelphia. I kept the child.

Who do I have to thank for this? Zeigfeld or Genthe.

The Two of Us by Elizabeth

[**New York**] In the spring of 1929 my friend and I had both travelled to New York from Cleveland in search of stardom. We were a package deal. I am the short one. Ziegfeld never took in '*twins'* … but no one told us that.

We had our picture taken by Genthe and well my friend got the call, not me. She said yes, one day packed her things and left me a note asking '*will I ever forgive her*.' She lasted two weeks. One of the managers tried to seduce her and she pushed him off! They gave her the pink slip and black balled her too for added measure. My friend went back home to Ohio. And that was the end of that.

A few days later the Follies called me. But they didn't know about me and my friend. I thanked them for the offer but instead I told them '*I already had a gig*,' even though I didn't.

For a few years it was a struggle, and I had to find other work but persevered and eventually I ended up dancing on several other stages around New York.

When I got tired of burlesque I married a respectable banker and settled down in New York. We had three children and two grandchildren … all girls.

By the way none of my daughters and granddaughters heard about my dancing career until my friend died and we went to her funeral in Cleveland.

They had a giggle when they saw the picture that Genthe had taken of my friend and I hanging on my friend's wall. We both had the picture because I paid Genthe to make two extra copies, one for my friend and one for me.

I know that many strangers have seen me naked. Genthe had promised me he would destroy the negative after he had made the three prints. Obviously he didn't … what a scoundrel! We never signed a release.

My Mother was Glad I wasn't Naked by Estella

[**New York**] Can you guess which one of the two I am? At dancing school they called me the *Swan*, but not because I was graceful and beautiful but because I was tall and gangly. My legs are really long and my hips were narrow, almost like a boy's. If you guessed I am the girl in the smock you are correct. We had tried an original pose with both of us partially naked but it really didn't work out well and so Genthe had me put on the smock.

When I showed my mother this picture she said she was glad I wasn't naked!

The Three of Us …by Marguerite

[**New York**] Dance schools were all the craze at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. The schools were meant to help 'finish girls into young women.' In actual fact they were warrens for lesbians love.

A warren is a city of rabbits, or a place that you can easily be lost in. Imagine dozens of vestal girls, at the verge of their first romantic trysts, all coming together to enjoy the freedoms that their bodies allow them. Imagine your dance school head is Isadora Duncan or someone else of this gist.

Then imagine the silliness that bubbles to the surface ... Her private studio was at a townhouse on Gramercy Park. We practices at a brownstone at 23rd and 4th. When

we performed for the public we danced our performances at the Century Theater at West 60th and Central Park West.

Our costumes were pretty risqué and did not leave much to the imagination. Here is Isadora in one of her famous poses:

You can tell she is not wearing a brassiere. She did not want her girls to feel encumbered so she encouraged us to dance without a bra and sometimes even without panties (if, of course, it was not our time of the month … even then she insisted that this should not stop us from being creative).

Her daughter Dierdre would sometimes dance with us in a lovely pink costume while her younger son Patrick, with his long tassels of hair, would dress up as Cupid and tease us …

Sometimes little Cupid's costume bottom would drop off and he would keep on prancing about. This was the first time I saw what a boy looked like. Little Patrick was a devil! His father was one of the Singers and so Patrick felt his calling was to sing. He had picked up a whole repertoire of stage songs, many of which were risqué and were from the burlesques. Whenever he had a chance he would sing and make us blush. He was a real wild one! We girls once watched him stand on a big oak chair, which he had dragged across the stage with some effect (it woke the dead),

then he peed into a fire bucket, arching ever so skillfully through the air. Not a drop missed its mark.

We could not stop giggling! For years and years afterwards I thought all men had such a small … you know what … until one day I discovered otherwise! It hadn't dawned on me that things would grow in proportion to the body it was attached too.

Once afternoon Ms. Duncan sent the three of us up the street to have our portrait done by Genthe. We dressed up in our costumes and he did a 'formal' picture of us, then he walked us over to his 'informal collection' a group of figurative albums. He did not have to ask. We understood what he wanted!

A few minutes later he took the figurative picture of the three of us. Can you guess which one of the three I am? I will give you a clue. I love Shakespeare!

He Gave me Two Dollars …by Violet

[**New York**] There is not much that needs be said. We girls knew what we had to do to '*get ahead in the trade*.' I was just sixteen at the time when he took this picture of me. I was also still a virgin … I knew of Arnie's appetite and should not have come alone to his studio. But I had no one to chaperone me and so the day I came to sit for him I was menstruating. That pushed him off me, but he said his balls were aching and turning blue. So I helped him with this … I had done the favor before for a stage hand who had a fancy to me. Genthe gave me two dollars as a thank you. That's over $ 50 today.

Ms. Duncan Told Us to Sit for Arnold Genthe … by Betty

[**New York**] Can you guess which of the two I am? You can tell by the expression on my face. I was thinking if my father found out I was doing this off to a nunnery I would go.

My friend is whispering into my ear that I am very beautiful. She said my breasts were remarkable. I am looking down at her body. This was the first time we had seen each other naked.

Later that afternoon we spent several hours sharing a bath together. She asked me and I let her put her little finger inside of me. This gave me such feelings that I blush even today as I think of this moment in my life. This was the moment I lost my virginity and also the moment when I realized I loved women better than men. Her finger was better than a man's penis. She being a women, could understand how to tease me.

My friend and I became lovers, the first of many women friends I had. I was never married and never had children. Even in the 1940's when I put on a tight sweater both women and men stared and envied me.

Of course I had to keep all of this from my parents. This would be worse than my having lost my virginity before marriage. My father would have sent me to a nunnery if only to keep me away from my women friends. But nuns are women too aren't they?

I guess I have both Isadora Duncan and Arnold Genthe to thank for this. By the way Isadora figured me out … she also had long exquisite fingers.

Playing With a Feather by Sally

[**Montreal**] It was my birthday and a male friend invited me for afternoon tea. When I arrived I found a note on his door saying he was taking a nap … but do come in. There he was asleep wearing nothing but a loin cloth. It had a note … *Unwrap me*!

So I did! I took out my camera. I wanted to immortalize this moment.

There was another note. *Tickle me perhaps or not …*

I leaned forward and tasted his sex with my tongue. He rolled on his side.

I came close and admired him He was so soft and so vulnerable.

I tasted his penis again and he turtled …what does a turtle do when it's teased?

I ran my tongue from the base to his tip. He rolled over and began to grow …

He was still asleep. There was a feather and a note … *Tickle me if you want* …

So I tickled him.

I ticked his penis, his thighs and his balls …

He started to grow and grow …

I tickled him with my tongue and he quickly became more aroused.

I stepped out of my panties and began to finger myself, while I tongued him.

He was nearly erect and I was hot and bothered. There was another note.

How could I say no!

I guided his hand down to between my legs ...and rubbed his fingers softy against my sex …

He was still asleep when he came …

but not for long mind you.

“Happy Birthday’ he said to me when he woke and saw me. “Having fun?’ he asked.

I dropped my camera and mounted him, and rode him like a pony ... He did not stop me.

No you may not see my face … otherwise my husband might find out. Oh, I forgot to tell you I am a married woman.

From time to time I sneak over and my friend and I do art together. The day he invited me for tea, he was going to sit for me and we were going to do figurative sketches.

We did something more pleasant instead. When he let me mount him I did not put him inside of me. That would have been wrong. Is a married woman enjoying a bit of pleasure with a close friend doing something wrong? Come on don't be a prude.

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